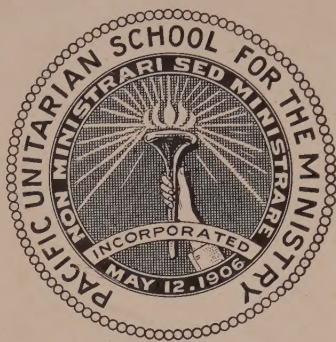






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No 419.

THE

CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,

AND

THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

VOL. II.

(*NEW SERIES.*)

Keep your mind always open to receive Truth, and never set limits to your own improvement. Be always ready to hear what may be objected even against your favourite Opinions, and those which have had longest Possession of your Assent. And if there should be any new and uncontrollable Evidence brought against these old or beloved Sentiments, do not wink your eyes fast against the Light, but part with any thing for the sake of Truth. Remember when you overcome an Error you gain Truth; the Victory is on your side and the advantage is all your own.

DR. WATTS.

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PREFACE.

THE Editor having come to the close of another year of his labours, presents this Second Volume of the Christian Reflector to his Subscribers, Correspondents, and the Public, with his grateful acknowledgements for their support, communications, and patronage, and hopes he shall be favoured with a continuance of the same for the ensuing Volume.

The original design of the Editor was to establish a cheap medium of communicating useful Biblical and religious information to those who have neither the means to obtain, nor the leisure to attend to larger works. He regards the Christian Reflector as a mite only, cast into the general treasury of useful information, and if the end designed has in any measure been accomplished, he will rejoice that his labours have not been in vain.

It has been no small gratification to the Editor to find that many articles have been copied, from the *Christian Reflector*, into the *American Periodicals*, and as he exchanges his work with some of the Publishers of American Unitarian works, he hopes to be able to extract from them articles which will be highly interesting to English Readers.

Having formed a connection with the Publisher of a French work, intituled, "*Revue Protestante*," he will be able to enrich the pages of the next Volume with extracts from that Work.

Notwithstanding the boasts of reputed Orthodoxy, there is much reason to be satisfied with the increase of Christian Unitarianism in the world, and the friends of pure, unadulterated christianity, may with confidence look forward to its final triumph. The signs of the times are upon us, and the period is not far distant when the Glory of Jehovah shall fill the earth, when his name shall be acknowledged as ONE, and his praise shall be ONE, in all the nations of mankind.

Liverpool, December, 1826.

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THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

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ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(From Burder's Oriental Literature.)

PSALM 1, 2, 3.

How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord. The sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even thine altars, O Lord of Hosts.

THE first part of the Psalm cannot be better illustrated (let there be no misrepresentation of our meaning) than by the example of those who go on pilgrimage to Mecca. As their enthusiasm increases in proportion as they advance through the desert to the holy place; as they are used to be ravished when they behold the shining towers of the Kaaba, so does the journey to Jerusalem proceed with increasing longing spirit and joy through the scorched valleys. They become as it were a well of water, for already at Baca they behold the face of Jehovah. (ver. 6.) HERDER'S *Spirit of the Hebrew Poetry*, part ii. p. 125. *Rosenmüller.*

The Ibis was so venerated in Egypt, as to be an allowed inmate in sacred structures. Something of the same kind occurs also in Persia. "Within a mosque at Oudjicun, lies interred the son of a king, called Schah-Zadeh-Imam Dgiafer, whom they reckon a saint: the dome is rough cast over; before the

mosque there is a court, well planted with many high plane trees, on which we saw a great many storks that haunt thereabout all the year round." THEVENOT'S *Travels*, p. 122.

By the altars of Jehovah we are to understand the temple. The words probably refer to the custom of several nations of antiquity, that birds that build their nests on the temples, or within the limits of them, were not suffered to be driven away, much less killed, but found a secure and uninterrupted dwelling. Hence, when Aristodikus disturbed the birds' nests of the temple of Kumæ, and took the young from them, a voice, according to a tradition preserved by HERODOTUS, (i. 159.) is said to have spoken these words from the interior of the temple: "Most villainous of men how darest thou to do such a thing; to drive away such as seek refuge in my temple? The Athenians were so enraged at Aterbes, who had killed a sparrow which built on the temple of Æsculapius, that they killed him. See ÆLIAN'S *Miscellaneous History*, b. v. chap. 17. Among the Arabs, who are closely related to the Hebrews, birds which have built their nests on the temple of Mecca were inviolable from the earliest times. In the very ancient poem of a Dschorhamidish prince, published by A. SCHULTEN, (*Monum. vetust. Histor. Arab.* p. 1.) in which he laments that his tribe had been deprived of the protection of the sanctuary of Mecca, it is said, (verse 10.)

We lament the house, whose dove
Was never suffered to be hurt,
She remained there secure; in it also
The Sparrow built its nest.

Another ancient Arabian poet, NABEĞA the Dhobianit, (in *Silv. de Sacy's Chrestom. Ar.* vol. i. p. 328. See also vol. iii. p. 76) swears "by the sanctuary which affords shelter to the birds which seek it there." NIEBUHR, in his *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 270. says: "I will observe, that among the Mahometans, not only is the Kaba a refuge for the pigeons, but also on the mosques over the graves of Ali and Hossein, on the Dsjamea, or chief mosque at Helle, and in other cities, they are equally undisturbed." *Rosenmuller*.

REMARKS ON THE ORATORY OF THE PULPIT.

IN these realms, pronunciation ought to be consonant to the standard long established, by the ingenious writers on that subject, viz. Sheridan and Walker, If a sea-phrsae may be used, they have moored the English language: the former by his ingenuity; the latter by his improvements; and both by their unwearied application. By this, it is not meant, nor is it possible, that all should have the same tone. The Scotch will have one; the Irish another; the English more variety than both; as different counties seem to have adopted tones peculiar to themselves. Cockneyism sets all rules of pronunciation, and their authors at defiance: a sign at least of self-conceit, and not seldom of want in judgement.

It need scarcely be noticed that every public instructor should be strongly impressed with the subject on which he treats; because, not alive to feeling himself, he never can move, or affect his audience. As already hinted respecting Cockneyism, there must be nothing offensive to the ear in pronouncing, nor to the eye in action: both speech and gesture should seem natural; for the nigher he keeps to what is natural, the nigher he approaches to perfection. Demosthenes exercised his voice and regulated his action before a mirror; but a mode not less advantageous is, to see and hear good patterns, to observe, and listen with attention; to adopt what is graceful, to avoid the contrary; and what is still better, to employ a judicious friend to correct error in pronunciation and gesture. A voice firm and articulate, and a distinct pronunciation are vast advantages to a public speaker. But with these natural advantages, he must take care to recite with case: not so loud as to strain his voice, nor yet so low as to end in a whisper. For on the one hand, boisterous words and distorted actions are not only unartful but offensive; and on the other, whispering is absurd, and good for nothing. Hence we find that Stentor is not numbered among Homer's fine speakers; and that Cicero derided the Rhetoricians of his day for their noise and brawling. Every one should fill the place wherein he speaks. But if he exceeds the natural key of his voice, it will neither be sweet, nor soft, nor agreeable.

In that case he cannot give every syllable the full and distinct sound, which it ought to have ; nor can he conclude a sentence, with its proper cadence, which should be spoken audibly, so as to be heard without pain. In addressing an audience, the pulpit orator should beware of pronouncing every sentence in the same continued tone ; beginning loud, and ending in a kind of whisper. Nothing can be more disgusting to nice hearers ; and therefore above all, he ought to study and practise variation of voice. Besides, it should be done in a manner so regular as to change with the different parts of the subject ; and yet be always so equal with itself, as to preserve the harmony of speech. The art of this alteration consists in the high and low ; the vehement and the soft ; the swift and slow ; affectation always avoided ; for the less affected the variation may seem, it is the better, and more pleasing. An easy mode of acquiring this variation of voice is, to read aloud to ones-self ; to try, on different keys to please his own ear ; to read as he speaks in conversation ; nicely to observe those who excel, both in private and public ; and frequently to repeat portions of tragedy, in which all the turns of human passions are represented. A clear voice best informs the understanding ; a moderate sound is most agreeable to the ear ; provided it be distinct and easy to be heard. But in compositions, there are parts, in which the voice ought not to be sedate, or moderate ; exclamations, noble deeds, good actions require vehemence and lofty accents : their contraries require a tone, if not of anger, at least of disdain. The wonders of providence should be mentioned with a voice grave, but full of admiration. Joy and sorrow, fear and courage, and resentment and compassion, esteem and contempt require different tones and modulations.

In a prosopopeia, the voice should bear some resemblance to that of the person introduced ; with special care to guard against mimicry. In antithesis, the opposing member should be louder than the opposed. In a climax, the voice should gradually rise with its members. A dialogue requires alteration with its parts. A repetition louder in the second place. Emphatical words ought to be pronounced with force and distinction : likewise words of praise or dispraise.

Beginning an address, the voice should be low and modest ; sufficient however to be distinctly heard ; raised by degrees, as the subject may require ; and conclude with joy, triumph, and satisfaction. No indulgence can be granted to vulgar speaking, or awkward gesticulation. Too fast, or too slow are inadmissible, but such as the ear of the audience may keep time with the tongue of the speaker.

Recovering from a transport, or passion, the voice should be lowered, but not too much : and if any passage requires a loftier elevation, than ordinary, the voice should be spared for that elevation. A short period should be pronounced in one breath ; no pause in the middle of a sentence ; short after a short sentence ; and somewhat longer after a long one.

Foreigners accuse the English language of hissing like a serpent ; and their complaint is fortified, by the practice of many pulpit orators, who injudiciously dwell on, and prolong the hiss ; which cannot be pronounced too quick, or too short.

It is worth while also to remark, that in putting a question, two circumstances are to be observed, viz. the tone of voice, and the emphatic words. Both ought to be different from common enunciation, and peculiar to themselves. The former ought not to be so tame, as in simple narrative, nor yet so lofty as in what is pathetic : but somewhat earnest, as it were between both. The latter should be laid without exception on the first and last words in the sentence.

So much for pronunciation : few remarks will suffice for action. An orator ought not to make use of actions that are mean or low, or unbecoming : but of whatever kind, they should at least seem natural. A dejected look on mournful occasions ; and cheerful on cheerful subjects. The life of action, particularly in the pulpit, lies in the countenance. It is expressed in the eyes, the brow, the mouth, and voice : and for that reason, the whole visage should be adjusted to the matter in hand. Action and utterance should exactly correspond : the one to have a consent as it were, with the tones of the other. The posture of the body must not change every moment, nor should it keep long the same position. Distortions of the features, and shrugging up the

shoulders are inadmissible. So also the head, not to be stretched out, or thrown back too far ; nor hanging upon the breast, nor leaning, on one shoulder, or on the other : but in all calm speeches, or reasonings to preserve its natural position. It should not be without motion ; nor always moving ; but gently turning on the neck, now on one side, again on the other, as occasion requires, and then returning to its natural position ; but still so, as to be distinctly heard by all the audience. The eyes should not be ever rivetted to the book ; but for the greater part, on some of the audience ; gently turning from side to side, expressive of respect ; and looking them decently in the face, as in common discourse. In warm appeals, they may be raised up ; in strong aversions, turned down ; but so, as to seem natural expressions.

The hands should not be long idle ; but completely guarded from every movement like flourish, or extravagance. They should correspond, as if a sympathy between them. To express feeling, the right hand may be laid gently on the breast. When motion begins with either, it ought to slide gently to the other, and then end. These motions are just visible, as either inviting, or forbidding ; uniting or separating ; raising or depressing ; but ever totally distinct, and separate from the wildness of gesticulation.

We may suppose, that our Lord's delivery was calm, sedate and moderate : yet such the swell of sentiment, and the swell of clothing, that both made more than ordinary impression upon his audience. Hence the Roman Officers sent forth, by the Jewish Rulers to apprehend him, who, no doubt had heard their orators declaiming in the Roman Senate, and Roman Courts, returned without him, stating in the following remarkable words, "Never man spake like this man." Something similar may be said of Peter in his plain unadorned discourse, when three thousand souls were in one day added to the Christian Church. Such also, of Stephen the first martyr, when all that sat in council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face, as if it had been the face of an Angel. And let it not be forgotten that the Apostle Paul, by the force of pure reasoning, caused king Agrippa, one of his Judges, to exclaim, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." His reply was highly becoming in a minister of the

Gospel, and equally favorable to his own defence: I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. At the same time stretching forth both his hands, bound as they were together by a chain of iron.

Since then a gentle deportment, an easy gesture, the air and galantry of delivery, blended with courtesy and moderation, graced with the harmony of a pleasing voice; since a combination of these charms an audience more than all the figures of rhetoric, surely an Orator should consider well before he speaks, and even when he is speaking, how to modulate his voice, and to manage his gesture. As much as possible, all coughing and all ungraceful actions should be avoided in the pulpit; and the rules of pronunciation regularly observed in ordinary discourse. Hence they will become natural, and give satisfaction both to speaker and hearer.

Nor, in conclusion, can it be deemed faulty in an ecclesiastic sometimes to attend the stage, when honourable and exalted characters are to be personated; because opportunities will occur of hearing correct pronunciation of words and syllables; and where the emphasis is laid in every sentence.

“Qui studet optatam cursu, contingere metam

Multa tulit, fecitque puer..”

D. Y.

A SKETCH

Of the State of Christianity in Wales from the time of Pelagius to that of Wickliff.

In some of our former numbers, we inserted an account of the Introduction of Christianity into Britain, to the time of Pelagius, by the late Dr. W. Richards, of Lynn Regis. We now insert the following from the pen of the same writer. As these pamphlets, though printed, were never published, it is hoped the publication of them will be acceptable to the reader.

Ed.

It has been already observed, that after the enemies of the Pelagians had prevailed on the higher powers to condemn and

proscribe their opponents, they turned their attention to Britain, which they seemed to consider as the nursery or fountain head of the reputed heresy which they were opposing. This seems to be the truth of the matter; though some historians have represented the attention then paid by the continental christians to Britain, and the mission which they set on foot to that country, as the result of a previous application for that purpose from the British christians; but of this there seems no clear or good proof advanced; and it appears most probable that it originated in the forward and violent zeal of the adherents of the Pope and St. Austin, to improve the advantage they had already gained, and follow up the blow to the utter suppression and extirpation of the party and principles against which they had conceived so strong and so deadly an antipathy.

After the Emperor and the Pope had espoused the cause of St. Austin, St. Jerome, and their adherents, and become parties in the contest against the Pelagians, the continental churches, and those of Gaul and Armorica among the rest, being under their influence and power, would naturally and zealously embark in the same cause, and readily contribute as much as in them lay toward the completion of the work, by the reduction or conversion of the heterodox Britons to the Catholic faith. Councils, or Synods were accordingly convened in Gaul on the occasion; and at one of them, held in 429, it was agreed to send over certain missionaries to this country to promote the projected and desirable design, at the head of whom was placed the celebrated *St. Germain* or *Garmon*, as the Britons usually call him. Of this orthodox and renowned ancient missionary the following account has been given, on the authenticity and accuracy of which the reader, it is presumed, may safely rely. After telling us that he was the son of Rhedyw, otherwise Ridicus, and uncle of Emyr Llŵlaw, being his mother's brother, and one of the most distinguished British saints, to whom many of the Welsh churches are dedicated, and after whose name the ancient cathedral of the Cornish Britons was called St. Germain's, he adds as follows, "He was sent over to Britain in the year 429 by a council of the Gallican church to preach against what was called

the Pelagian heresy, but which was in reality the ancient and common doctrine of the British church, which blended many of the bardic principles with christianity ; and which at this period was successfully diffused by Morgant, or Pelagius. The true object, therefore, of the mission of Garmon was to bring the British christians under the discipline and power of the Catholic church, then beginning to aspire to that universal dominion, which soon after it established over the western empire. How far Garmon was successful in this mission is not very clear ; but his stay in the island was not very long. In the year 447 he was sent over a second time by another council of the church of Gaul, and probably with more extensive powers. He now established many colleges, as that of Llancarvan, that of Caer Wergorn ; at the head of which he placed his most experienced disciples, such as Dyvrig, Illtid, Bleiddan or Lupus, and Catwg, who taught agreeably to the tenets of the church of Rome. Bishops were also consecrated by him, and the chapters of whose dioceses formed ecclesiastical courts, which till then were unknown in Britain."† Garmon it is said, was himself a Gallican bishop, whose see was that of Auxerre ; as Troyes was also, it seems, the see of his friend and companion Lupus, otherwise Bleiddan.||

Upon the first arrival of these strangers in this land it appears that a council was assembled at Verulum, or St. Alban's, in which it was managed to have Pelagianism solemnly condemned. After which they proceeded in their work of converting the inhabitants and confuting the heretics ; and by the report of Catholic writers, their labours were attended with no small success. However that was, their stay here does not appear to have been very long : most, if not all of them, and St. Germain among the rest, returned home again after a while. Nor do we find that they afterward paid this country another visit for many years. Among their chief opponents here was a person of the name of Agricola, said to have been a man of abilities and a zealous friend of Pelagius ; and though they were reported to

† Owen's Cambrian Biography, article Garmon.

|| Carte, i, 183.

have confuted him and silenced the rest of their opposers, their victory does not appear very complete or decisive, for the reputed heresy was soon found to be very far from being suppressed or eradicated. In time its appearances excited so much alarm among the zealous Catholics abroad, that orthodoxy and the church were thought to be in no small danger. It was therefore thought necessary to set on foot another mission to this country of which St. Germain again appeared as a principal. His second, as well as first visit hither appears to have been but short: the last is supposed to have not much exceeded a year, for we are told that, on his return from hence, he set out immediately for Italy, and died at Ravenna, July 31, 448; after having possessed the bishopric of Auxerre about thirty years. Other accounts, however, have placed his death in 450: in that case his second visit to our Island might have taken up about three years; and this opinion has been thought by some the most probable, considering the extent or magnitude of the work which he is said to have accomplished here in the mean time.

St. Germain seems to have united the characters of politician and warrior with that of a christian missionary; and he appears not only to have encouraged the Britons to military exertions; but also, in one instance, at least, even to lead them himself to battle against the united forces of the Picts and Saxons, when the Britons obtained a complete and decisive victory, at a place since called Maes Garmon, near Gwyddgrug, or Mold, in Flintshire. This, of course, would effectually recommend him to the favour of the rulers of the country, and of the nation at large; and we may be pretty well assured that he owed to these circumstances no small part of his popularity, and of the advantages he gained over the Pelagians. The latter seem to have been a passive and unwarlike sect somewhat resembling our modern Quakers, so that it can be no great wonder that the higher powers should dislike them and favour their opponents. The opinion of the superior sanctity of St. Germain and his possessing the power to work miracles is a proof of the great popularity he had acquired, and how dexterously he must

have acted his part in promoting the cause committed to his management, as well as how sagely his countrymen had judged in placing him at the head of the mission. Having obtained and secured the countenance and patronage of the rulers, he set himself in good earnest about improving his advantages, by contriving and pursuing such measures as he thought best calculated to answer the great ends which he had in view, the establishment of his own faith, and the suppression of that of his opponents; and it must be confessed that he here discovered no small, or mean abilities. He established bishopricks and colleges, under the patronage of the civil power, in different parts of the country; and especially among the Silurians, whose princes had long taken the lead as patrons of christianity, and of foreign missionaries. In those bishoprics, and at the head of those colleges, as was before intimated, he placed his most able and trusty disciples. Vast numbers of students were carefully and orthodoxly trained up in these seminaries, and being patronized by the government, while their opponents were discountenanced, interdicted, and proscribed; their cause rapidly gained ground, and soon became firmly established. The old religion, called Pelagianism, however, was not very speedily or easily eradicated. It continued to exist and to struggle against its adversaries long after the departure of St. Germain. The famous Synod held at Llanddewi-brefi, avowedly against it, in the time of David, is a standing proof that its adherents were then neither few nor feeble. That Synod was held in 1519, though some give it an earlier date, and was distinguished, as Giraldus Cambrensis and others have reported, by certain miraculous events, in favour of the orthodox party; such as the restoration of a dead man to life, and the earth swelling into a high hill under the feet of St. David, while he was there preaching. These wonders are said to have powerfully operated (and well they might) to the confusion of the heretics, and the establishment and triumph of true believers. Their saying so, however, is no proof that those supernatural events did actually take place: it only proves how high St. David stood in the opinion of his countrymen, long after he had departed this mortal life—so high,

seems, that they would readily believe any marvellous tale in his commendation that the monkish historians thought proper to invent. No matter how extraordinary or improbable the tale might be, it was sure of meeting with implicit credit, provided it tended to extol or magnify his superior sanctity. Except, perhaps, his nephew king Arthur, no one among the good people of Wales ever acquired so much fame as did St. David.

Among all the ancient tales fabricated respecting him, one of the most remarkable is that which states, that in order that his countrymen, and especially those of his diocese might be duly forewarned and prepared for their approaching dissolution, he prayed to God that *corpse candles* and *funeral apparitions** might precede every death that should there happen through all succeeding generations; which pious request was readily and instantly granted; though this tale of tradition is at present in a great measure forgotten, yet the firm belief of the existence or reality of funeral apparitions and corpse candles still obtains among the greatest part of the inhabitants, dissenters as well as churchmen, who deem the stories that are told about those pretended sights or appearances to be as true as the gospel, and are ready to rank all who disbelieve, or in any doubt concerning them among Infidels, Sadducees, and Atheists.—Here let not the English exult over the superstitious credulity of their Welsh neighbours: they themselves have also their weak side, and are as often the dupes of blind credulity and artful impostors as the Welsh or any other people.

(To be continued.)

BULL OF POPE ALEXANDER VI.

The following is a copy of the Grant made by Alexander vi. Bishop of Rome, of the Countries and Islands of the New World, to the kings of Castille and their successors.

Alexander, Bishop, the servant of the servants of God, to our dearly beloved son in Christ, Ferdinand, king; and to our dearly

(*) The corpse candle is said to be a small light like that of a candle proceeding in the night time as it is believed previous to every death from the house where a person is to die, to the church or burying place. A funeral apparition is the exact apparition of a funeral that is shortly to happen, and which many people pretend they have often seen.

beloved daughter in Christ, Isabella, queen, of Castille, Leon Arragon, Sicily and Granada, most illustrious princes, wisheth all health and apostolic benediction.

Of all the works that are acceptable to the Divine Majesty, and agreeable to our wishes, that, doubtless, is the greatest which consists in promoting, enlarging, and conveying into all parts, the Catholic Faith and Christian Religion, especially in the age in which we live; in procuring the salvation of souls; in subduing and converting the barbarous nations. We therefore being called, by the Divine clemency, (though without a suitable merit) to St. Peter's sacred chair, and having always known you to be true Catholic kings and princes, especially considering that your noble exploits, celebrated almost all the world over, are demonstrative evidence, that you not only wish for the advancement of the Catholic interest, but actually promote it, by all your efforts, study and diligence, sparing no labor, expence, or danger, not even the effusion of your own blood; in a word, that all your thoughts and endeavors have for a long time been solely bent upon it; of which your rescuing of the kingdom of Grenada from the tyranny of the Saracens, in our time, to the infinite glory of the Divine Name, is a memorable instance. As these accounts plead your merit, so we are sensible that we ought of our own accord, and out of pure favor, to grant you what may enable you to carry on and pursue with growing fervency, your holy and laudable designs so acceptable to the immortal being, in order to promote the honor of his name, and enlarge the bounds of Christianity. In earnest we are informed, that you had formed a design sometime ago, to carry on the discovery and conquest of some remote Islands and Continents that are not yet known, or discovered by others; in order to reduce the inhabitants to the worship of our Redeemer, and the profession of our Catholic Faith; but being then diverted by the conquest of the kingdom of Grenada, you were not at that time able to compass your holy and laudable ends.

We understand likewise, that at last having recovered Grenada, pursuant to the Divine Will, you pursued your former intention, by appointing our beloved son, Christopher Columbus, a man of worth and repute, and qualified for so great an undertaking, to visit the seas that navigation had not reached, in quest of the remote and undiscovered Continents and Islands, and furnished him with men and shipping proper for the purpose, not without great labor, danger and charge. That the said Christopher and his companions, by God's assistance, sailing with extreme diligence through the ocean, did accordingly, discover some very remote Islands, and even Continents that were formerly unknown, and are inhabited by several *peaceable* nations, which, (as it is said,) go naked, and abstain from flesh, and in the opinion of your discoverers, believe that one God, the Creator of the uni-

verse, resides in heaven, and seem sufficiently disposed for embracing civility, and the Catholic Faith, insomuch, that it is hoped that proper instruction would easily introduce the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, into the above mentioned Continents and Islands.

Our intelligence, likewise bears, that the said Christopher caused a fortress of some strength to be built, in one of the most considerable of those Islands, and has therein placed a Garrison of some Christians, that accompanied him, who are likewise to look out for other undiscovered Islands and Continents. That the Islands and Continents thus discovered afford *plenty of gold, silver, and several other precious things.*

That you, after mature consideration of all the circumstances, especially the promotion and enlargement of the Catholic Religion, pursuant to the duty of Catholic kings and princes, have resolved, in imitation of the illustrious kings your ancestors, by the favor of almighty God, to subdue and reclaim to the Catholic Faith, the above mentioned Continents and Islands, their natives and inhabitants. Now we, approving very much of this your holy and godly purpose in our Lord, and desiring that it may be brought to its accomplishment, that the name of our Saviour may be established in those parts, do seriously exhort you in our Lord, conjuring you by your holy baptism, which obliges you to an apostolic obedience, and earnestly require you by the bowels of the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, that since you intend, out of a zeal for the orthodox faith, vigorously to pursue and carry on the said expedition, to reduce the people of the aforesaid lands and Islands to the Christian Religion. You shall not be at any time scared by danger or labor, relying upon a firm hope and confidence that the Almighty will crown your endeavors with success.

And to the end that the *bounty* of apostolic grace may inspire you with more freedom and boldness in pursuing so great a design, we do of our own accord, without any influence from your solicitation, or that of others in your behalf, but out of our own pure *bounty*, and by virtue of certain knowledge and the fulness of apostolic power, give, grant, and assign to you, your heirs and successors, the kings of Castille and Leon, all the Islands and Continents found, or to be found ; discovered, or to be discovered, toward the west and south, whether towards India or any other part, drawing a line from the arctic pole, on the north, to the antarctic pole, south, at the distance of one hundred leagues towards the west, and south from any of the Islands that are commonly called the *Azores* or *Capa Verde*, so that all the Islands and Continents found and to be found, discovered and to be discovered from the said line towards the west and south, that were not actually possessed by any christian prince before the last Christmas, viz. the commencement of the present year, of our Lord, 1493 ; any of the countries, I say, when discovered by your cap-

tain and servants, together with the dominion, cities, castles, forts, villages, rights, jurisdictions, and all appurtenances, are, by the tenor of these presents, given; granted, and assigned to you, your heirs and successors for ever, by virtue of the authority of Almighty God, granted to us in St. Peter, and vicarship of Jesus Christ, lodged in us upon earth. And thereby make, constitute, and depute you, your heirs and successors, the lords thereof, with full, free, and universal power, authority, and jurisdiction; provided still, that this our gift, grant, and assignation, shall not be understood to dispossess any Christian prince of what Islands or Continents he may have possessed before the Christmas above mentioned.

And further, with regard to that holy obedience which you have promised, and we doubt not will perform, in conformity to your singular devotion, and royal magnanimity, we command you to pursue the premises, with utmost diligence, and to send to those Islands and Continents, men of probity and learning, such as fear God, and are qualified to instruct the inhabitants in the Catholic Faith and good manners. At the same time, we strictly prohibit all persons of what estate, degree, order, or profession soever, or whatever dignity, whether imperial or regal, under pain of the sentence of excommunication, to presume without the special leave of you, or your heirs and successors, under the pretence of trade, or any other, to touch upon the said Continents or Islands, found or to be found; discovered or to be discovered towards the west or east, whether towards India or any other part, a line being drawn from the arctic to the antarctic pole, at the distance of one hundred leagues to the west and south from any of the Islands that are commonly called the Azores or Cape Verde. Notwithstanding any constitution, decrees, and apostolic orders to the contrary.

In him, from whom empire, dominion, and all good things do proceed, trusting, that by the direction of Almighty God, if you pursue your holy and laudable design; your labors and endeavors will in a short time be brought to a happy conclusion, to the glory and felicity of all Christendom.

Forasmuch as these letters cannot without great difficulty be conveyed to all the places, where it may be convenient to show them, we do with equal knowledge and good will declare, that the same faith and credit, should be given in all places, whether before courts, or any where else, to the transcript of these letters, signed by a public notary, thereunto required, and attested by the seal of an ecclesiastical court, or of any persons invested with ecclesiastical dignity as would be given to the original itself. Let no man whatsoever offer to infringe, or with a rash attempt to counteract this letter of our commendation, exhortation, demand gift, grant, assignation, constitution, deputation, decree, command prohibition and determination. If any has the presumption

to venture upon such an attempt, he is hereby given to know, that he will thereby incur the indignation of the Almighty God, and Peter and Paul his holy apostles.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, in the year of the incarnation, 1493, 3rd. of May, in the first year of our popedom.

ALEXANDER.

THE AMERICAN UNITARIANS.

To the Editor:

SIR,

HAVING been led to suppose, that the Unitarians on the other side of the Atlantic, were a pattern of zeal in the cause of truth, highly worthy of the imitation of the English Unitarians, it was with deep regret I read the following observations in the American Critical Synopsis of the Monthly Repository, which appeared in the last number. p. 658.

“Would that we in America had more of the spirit of communicating to our own household of faith! But there is scarcely a more hopeless expedition under the sun than a begging one here in behalf of an Unitarian Church.* The Unitarian Chapel in Baltimore is the most beautiful edifice in the United States. Its proprietors have already paid sixty thousand dollars for the building, twenty thousand more will purchase the ground on which it stands, and which must either be bought, or the whole establishment be sold out of the hands of the present proprietors. They can raise, though with difficulty, 7,000 dollars. They have in their private capacities, been peculiar sufferers by unavoidable commercial embarrassments. They now offer to their countrymen to invest the remaining 13,000 dollars in three per cent stock, to be secured by a mortgage on the whole ground edifice, and to be redeemed in fifteen years. I have my doubts whether this accommodating project will possibly succeed; although in the single city of Boston, there are five hundred Unitarians, whose purses are ever open to applications for other charitable objects,

* Have the Unitarians in America been tried? If not, it is hardly fair to assume that they would meet the application with a direct refusal. It is but candid to hope, they would meet it very differently. At any rate, it is better to try, than to sit down in despair.

and each of whom could make an outright present to the Baltimore Church of ten thousand dollars, without the necessity of abridging a spoonful of sauce from their daily elegant and hospitable tables. Already the Trinitarians, with an ominous vulture-like eagerness, are flapping their wings and muttering their triumphs over the impending dissolution of that devoted church. May their predictions and mine be alike blasted !”

The above, I hope, is a little overcharged, from the too sanguine temperament of the writer. If not, every zealous Unitarian in England will heartily join in his concluding prayer ; and will add, also, may the Unitarians of America do honour to themselves and their cause, by a simultaneous act of liberality, truly worthy of the Christian name !

It is, however, much to be wished, that not a vestige of *propriety* should be left remaining. I am far from saying, that, in many cases, it is not the result of very pure intention : I believe it is ; and particularly in the case alluded to. But in all, it sounds too much like making merchandize of religion. It is dangerous to religious liberty and equality. It erects a power in congregations which ought not to exist. It is, in a different form, the enormous patronage of the Church of England establishment. It is the antichristian grasping at authority, in the Wesleyan conference. It is, in fine, priestly domination and tyranny, in laity's garb. By enhancing pew rents, and rendering heavy subscriptions necessary, in addition to pew rents, it virtually excludes the poor from congregations ; so that it can no longer be said, “the rich and the poor meet together ;” and christian congregations present a far different, and a much less amiable character, than Jesus Christ, in his universal benevolence, intended that they should. It was his gracious declaration, “The poor have the gospel preached to them ;” but it is the declaration, or the spirit, of this principle, “The gospel is preached only to the rich.” And invidious distinctions are created, and christian fellowship and brotherly love are destroyed, and christianity suffers by an example so inconsistent with nobleness of mind, and benevolence of heart. May heaven, in its mercy, save the American land from so grievous an affliction ! And may it speedily banish it from our own.

One word, Mr. Editor, respecting the erection of splendid edifices, whether in America or in England, for the worship of God. This savours of worldly pride, is a lavish waste of the means to promote the interests of truth, and is inconsistent with "the simplicity that is in Christ." Places of worship should be commodious, but not splendid; convenient and comfortable, but not designed to fascinate the eye. The sincere tribute of the heart, is as acceptable to the father of lights, under the humble roof of the cottage, as the lofty dome of the towering cathedral. For "the true worshippers must worship the father in spirit, and in truth: for the father seeketh such to worship him."

I shall conclude, Mr. Editor, with expressing a hope, that, as America is a pattern to the world in politics, she may be so, as far as the influence of Unitarians can extend, in religion.

AN ENGLISH UNITARIAN.

Unitarian Congregation, Hunter Street, Liverpool.

To the Editors.

SIRS,

THE Committee, as well as many of the other members of the Unitarian Congregation now assembling in Hunter Street, in this town, having long thought that their respected friend, Mr. F. B. Wright, should be complimented for his valuable services as their Minister, about a month since commenced a subscription for the purpose of presenting him with some suitable token of their regard, and accordingly, on Sunday evening last, the 18th inst. immediately after evening service, a handsome gold watch, and a suitable address were delivered to him, in the presence of a numerous audience.

Knowing that your insertion of the address on this occasion will give much satisfaction to the friends of Mr. Wright, and many of your readers, I herewith send them, and remain your most Obedient Servant,

W. TAYLOR, SECRETARY.

Liverpool, Dec. 21st, 1825.

The Address, &c., were presented by the Secretary, who observed that it gave him great pleasure in having the duty to perform, and that he could not resist taking the opportunity of expressing his individual thanks for the instruction he had received from Mr. Wright's public labours, and of acknowledging the happiness he enjoyed in the possession of his friendship.

The Address was as follows:—

MR. FRANCIS BROWNE WRIGHT,

DEAR SIR,

IT is with unfeigned sentiments of regard that we, the Congregation of Unitarian Christians assembling in Hunter Street, Liverpool, now address you. Your indefatigable exertions as gratuitous pastor, and your kindness as a pecuniary benefactor, to this society, ever since its formation in the year 1818, call forth our most cordial thanks; and however glowing the language which we might make use of on this occasion, it would fail in expressing the grateful feeling of our hearts.

From whatever point of view we look upon your character, we see just cause of admiration. The zealous friend, the cheerful companion, the modest instructor, the enlightened supporter of civil and religious liberty, and, as peculiarly regards us as a body, the undeviating and undaunted advocate of Unitarian Christianity, stand forth in you pre-eminently conspicuous. In your mild and unassuming deportment, christianity wears its original garb, unsullied by hypocritical pretensions to sanctity on the one hand, or by levity on the other. Careless of the smiles, and regardless of the frowns of the rich and powerful, we see you pursuing "the even tenor of your way" through the difficulties with which this mortal road is thickly strewed; your eye constantly fixed upon the bright reward which gleams at the extremity of your path.

It is therefore in consequence of this your truly disinterested and christian-like conduct, that we now present you with the accompanying Gold Watch and its appendages, as a sincere though inadequate token of the admiration we feel for your virtues; and though the gift be of small value, yet knowing well the character of the man we are addressing, we console ourselves with the idea that it will be received with more true pleasure, than the costly vase or towering chandelier can give to minds less susceptible of feeling.

May you enjoy a long and happy life here; and when time, which this tribute of our respect serves to indicate, shall be to you no more, may you, through the endless period of eternity, enjoy that happiness "which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which hath not entered into the heart of man to conceive."

Liverpool, December 18th, 1825.

After the Address had been read, Mr. Wright spoke to the following effect :

My Dear Sir, and You, my Christian Friends,

I find myself exceedingly embarrassed at this moment, not being able to find words by which to express the feelings of my mind, nor expressions any way adequate to your kindness. Had you presented me with this affectionate Address only, it would have been gratifying to my feelings, and as a token of your respect and Christian affection, would have been received by me as a treasure to be highly prized. You have carried your respect further than verbal expressions, and the accompanying mark of your esteem, which is indeed elegant, valuable, and useful, and the delicate manner in which the business has been conducted, I can assure you, have made an impression on my mind, which nothing will ever obliterate ; and for which I beg to return you my most sincere thanks, and my most affectionate and ardent wishes for your happiness.

You have, my friends, been pleased in your Address, to characterize my exertions in favor of this society “ disinterested ;” this is correct in one point of view ; but under another point of view, I cannot say that I have been disinterested. No, my friends, I have sought your improvement, I have endeavored to promote your happiness, because my own improvement, and my own happiness are so inseparably connected with yours, that in proportion as yours is promoted my own is increased. I trust that if I cannot plead disinterestedness, I can sincerity. I hope that I have been faithful, ever since I have been your minister, in advising, admonishing, warning and in reproving you. I hope I can use the language of the apostle, “ What wish we, brethren, but your perfection ?” your establishment in the christian faith and practice. And to say with him, “ Now we live,” we enjoy life, we live to some useful purpose, “ if ye stand fast in the Lord.”

It is but a little while longer that I can, from the period of life to which I have arrived, look forward to active exertions

among you. The little engine which you have presented to me, reminds me of the rapid flight of time. Soon my friends will the majority of you I am now addressing pass the "bourne from which no traveller returns." Let me exhort you, as one who may soon be no longer with you, let me earnestly exhort you, to improve the moments that remain to you ; to be earnest in the pursuit of those treasures which time cannot destroy : to improve your present opportunities in preparation for that unfading inheritance to which the gospel directs you as the end of your faith and christian warfare.

This little engine will be a memento to others of the rapidity of those moments which make the sum of human life ; when I shall be sleeping in the dust. Then, when I shall be no longer a partner in your joys and your sorrows, when I shall no longer rejoice in your christian progress, or mourn over the indifference of any of you ; then may you, my friends, who shall survive me, remember the lessons I have taught you, and may you continue steadfast in the faith and hope of the gospel, adorning your christian profession with the fruits of righteousness and of holiness.

But the period is fast approaching, when the movements of this little engine shall be stopt. When this world and its fashion shall pass away. Yet a little while, and the angel of the apocalypse, " placing one foot on the sea and the other on the land, shall lift his hand to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever and ever, that there shall be time no longer."

We are called upon not only to contemplate the dissolution of the present state of things, but to look forward to the period, when he whom, though we now see him not, we love, in whom we rejoice as the messenger of our salvation, shall appear again, in the glory of his heavenly Father, as the appointed agent of the Most High to raise the dead, and to complete his great and important mission in his future kingdom, when he will take to himself his great power and reign as the chosen king of Jehovah. Then, my friends we shall meet again ; may it be your happiness to meet me as one who has been faithful ; and may it be my happiness to meet you as those to whom I have been the instrument

of good, and to find in you my crown of rejoicing, my joy in the day of the Lord Jesus; and may we all receive the welcome of our great Lord and Master, be acknowledged by him as his faithful servants, and be received by him as his friends.

Finally, my friends, my most ardent wishes in life and in death, are, that the blessing of almighty God may attend you through life, his presence be your solace and support when you tread the dark valley that leads to the tomb, and that in the world to come you may enjoy life everlasting.

Accept my thanks for your kindness, and believe me to be your ever affectionate friend, and devoted servant in the gospel.

POETRY.

(Original.)

THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR.

Hark! on yon distant evening bells
The merry peal of gladness swells,
While many a tale their music tells
Of joys and griefs gone by!
Another year has wing'd its flight;
And all its prospects of delight
Are flitting fast from mortal sight,
As empty shadows fly.

Methinks at such a time;—tis sweet
A gleam from memory's lamp to greet,
And with it hold communion meet
For pleasure's social hour.
To trace the scenes of earlier years;
To muse on blended hopes and fears,
Unclouded now by sighs and tears,
Or Sorrow's pensive power.

Time swiftly flies! But where are we?
Still tempest-tost on Life's rude sea,
Or would we from its changes flee?
Forgive, O Heaven, the thought!
For oft amidst the chequer'd scene,
A radiant hour will intervene;
And rays of bliss may shine between
With joyous rapture fraught.

And where are ye, whose welcome smile
Would many a weary hour beguile;
And twining round my heart the while
A wreath of friendship's flowers?
Aye, where are ye, the young, the gay,
Who oft with me were wont to stray
Through youth's serene, unclouded way;
In Life's far happiest hours?

They liv'd, and lov'd, yet now *are not* !
 But ne'er their names shall be forgot,
 Till in yon silent hallow'd spot,
 The Bells peal o'er *my* tomb !
 Though Life's fair summer then be past,
 E'en Winter's stern and angry blast,
 May waft my spirit safe at last
 Where springs eternal bloom !

To Him, enthron'd in light sublime,
 Who guides the ceaseless wheel of Time;
 Fain would my heart's best wishes climb;—
 And raise an altar here !
 And on it lay the incense sweet
 Of fervent prayers, and praises meet
 His never ending gifts to greet;
 And hail the coming Year.

J. M.

Honiton.

ON THE CLOSE OF THE YEAR 1825.

Swift o'er the Sea the Vessel sails,
 Bound to some distant shore;
 But swifter far the fleeting day
 Goes—and returns no more.

The Mountain's stream flows swiftly on,
 And mingles with the Sea;
 And Time rolls thus unnotic'd by
 To vast Eternity.

And thou art gone, O fleeting Year,
 How short ! how swift thy flight !
 And many an eye that saw thee dawn
 Is clos'd in endless night.

Awake ! awake ! ye sons of men !
 Short is the time that's given,
 Eternity must be your aim
 Eternity and heaven.

O God ! all powerful just and good,
 May I thy laws obey
 And reign with thee when Time is past,
 An everlasting Day.

ON THE FLIGHT OF TIME.

Time's rapid stream, still sweeps along
 Bearing its sons away;
 Th' impetuous torrent none can stem
 Its progress none can stay.

Another circling course we've run,
 Of which so few we share;
 The close of time is hast'ning on,
 And soon it must appear.

Hear, mortal man! Thy maker's voice
 Bids thee for death prepare;
 Thy awful summons soon must come,
 The Messenger is near.

Thy wordly schemes and earthly hopes
 A moment may destroy;
 No longer then be lingering here,
 But seek Eternal joy.

Thy brightest visions just appear,
 Then vanish from thy eyes;
 Thy dearest hopes are all too poor,
 If fix'd below the skies.

The silvery locks of hoary age
 Are ripening full fast;
 Perhaps the opening year to him
 May prove to be his last.

Though some may boast of strength mature
 In life's meridan fix'd;
 Th' unthought of harbinger appears,
 And with the dead they're mix'd.

Nor is the vigorous glow of youth,
 Still more secure than they;
 The "silver cord" perchance may snap,
 E'er Nature feels decay.

The patriarch's age, the infant's day,
 Alike his power confess;
 Oh! let the awful thought strike deep,
 "Uncertain are our days."

Since then there's nought secure below,
 Let us for death prepare;
 That when this earth shall be no more,
 We joy and peace may share.

This tabernacle here below,
 Is not thy fix'd abode;
 Why then would'st thou be resting here,
 "Prepare to meet thy God."

H.

Warrington.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The favours of our correspondents this month have come so late to hand, that our arrangements were made previously to their arrival—the papers on the Discussions at Wigan shall have an early attention. We thank our friend for the article on Confirmation.

M's lines shall have a place in our next.

Just as we were going to press, we received important communications from America, but too late to make use of in our present number.

F. B. Wright, Printer, Swift's Court, Castle Street Liverpool.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
 AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 14. NEW SERIES.

Price 4½d.

FEBRUARY 1, 1826.

UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

In the second volume of our former series of the Christian Reflector we communicated the intelligence of the laying of the foundation Stone of a Temple in New York, dedicated to the One Living and Eternal Jehovah, the God and Father of us and of our Lord Jesus the Christ; which took place on the 29th April, 1820. It is with renewed and increased pleasure we now inform our readers, that the foundation of another Temple in the same City, dedicated to the One God, was laid on the 24th November, 1825. Our earnest wish is, that "peace may be within its walls and prosperity within its gates," and that it may lead the way to, and prepare the public for, another and another such building in that City. The following we copy from the New York Christian Inquirer.

On Thursday, November 24th last, agreeably to public notice, the corner stone of the Second Congregational Unitarian Church, corner of Prince and Mercer Streets, in this City, was laid in the presence of six or seven hundred persons, who had assembled to witness the ceremonies. The throne of grace was addressed in a very appropriate and fervent manner by the Rev. William Ware, Pastor of the First Congregational Church, after which the corner stone was laid, enclosing a brass plate with the following inscription:

The Second Congregational Unitarian Church
 in the City of New-York;

Erected by Private Subscriptions.

This Stone laid with Religious Ceremonies,

NOVEMBER 24, 1825.

To us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Cor. 8, 6,

REVERSE.

Asaph Stone,

J. G. Pearson,

Robert Schuyler,

} Building Committee:

H. D. Sewall, Treasurer.

Isaac Lucas, Master Builder.

When the stone was laid, the Rev. Mr. Ware addressed the assembly in an animated and impressive manner, and to the sentiments delivered on the occasion, every sincere and liberal christian will cheerfully add his hearty amen. The day was uncommonly pleasant for the season, and every thing conspired to render the scene peculiarly interesting, and the aspirations of many hearts ascended to the giver of all good, that prosperity may attend the undertaking. We are pleased to have it in our power to lay the address before our readers, which should be read with attention by every one who wishes to have a summary of Unitarian belief.

ADDRESS.

It is a good custom, that when about to lay the first stone of a building to be dedicated to God and his worship, we assemble together and ask his blessing on the work, and, that to those who are standing around we declare the motives by which we are actuated and explain the principles of that christian faith in which we commence so interesting a labor.

We begin, then, the building of this house of prayer that the increasing numbers of those who are believers in the strict unity of God and lovers of real christian liberty, may have a convenient place where they may gather themselves together and unite in the solemnities of social worship—where they may pray to the only God through the only mediator—where they may hear the doctrine of Christ preached, as they think, in its first simplicity, and where they may be built up together in the knowledge and obedience of the truth as it is in Jesus. With the greater attention that is daily given by christians of every name to the discovery of truth and the detection of error, and with the increase of our city it has necessarily happened, that the number of Unitarian believers has greatly multiplied and that more ample accommodations for religious worship are needed. It is to meet this want that we have begun to lay the foundation of this house of prayer. When four years ago, the building of the first congregational church was commenced in this place, it was little thought that in so short a time the erection of a second would become necessary. But through the blessing of God on the cause of pure christianity, the most ardent anticipations of those who first entered into this field of honourable labour have been more than answered, and we hope and pray that before an equal period shall have elapsed, through the continued blessing of heaven, another will have been begun and completed.

To those who stand here, and some of whom may be ignorant of the principles of that christian faith which we profess, and in behalf of which we begin this church, to them and to all who are here present, I would say, that we lay this stone, the corner stone of a christian temple in the firm and happy belief of one God, the Father, almighty, wise, just, good and merciful, the God of

our lives and the God of salvation. Rejecting as the inventions of a benighted age of the church all distinction of persons in the Deity, and all ideas of his character that do not comport with the paternal relation which he sustains to his creatures—we here begin a house, where God may be worshipped as the only God, the Father, without equal, without partner, through faith in Jesus Christ his well-beloved Son our Saviour and Redeemer. Believing thus, as we think, on most certain warrant of holy Scripture, we look up with humble confidence for the blessing of Almighty God on our undertaking.

We lay this stone—as joyful believers in Jesus Christ; as believers in the *divinity of his mission*—in the supreme authority of his doctrine—in the miracles which he wrought, by the power of God, in confirmation of the truths he uttered. As believers in his prophetic and mediatorial character—that he is the only true prophet of God, that his religion is the only one that has God for its author, and the true happiness of men for its end—that all the commands, precepts, institutions of Jesus have the force and obligation of divine commands, precepts, and institutions,—that he is the only appointed medium of approach to God by prayer—that in his name all acceptable worship must be offered up—that the rejection of him is the rejection of God—that they who despise him, despise him who sent him. And we hope that they who believe thus in Christ, will here long enjoy a holy and happy communion through him with the Father of their spirits—that their faith, will here receive new strength—their good principles be confirmed and settled—their virtuous habits established—their devout affections enlivened and purified—that this house will indeed be then the house of God and the gate of heaven.

We lay this stone—in a belief of the christian doctrine of a resurrection from the dead, and of a state of righteous retribution beyond the grave—in the belief that all they who, according to the light they have, lead virtuous and devout lives, shall, through the infinite mercy of God, declared in Jesus Christ, be received to eternal life and joy—and that the unjust—all they who despise the riches of the goodness—fear and long suffering of God shall be reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished.

We lay this stone—as believers in the divine authority of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. We believe these books to contain the whole will of God as it was revealed to the Jews by his prophets and to the world by Jesus Christ his Son. The Bible is the rule of our faith: its chapters and verses are the articles of our creed—the Bible is the rule of our conduct—the Bible is the charter of our immortal hopes. With this volume open in our hands, and reading as we go, we walk fearlessly through the world; sure that it will guide us right in the midst of duty and trial, and lead us at last to the desired haven. We rejoice in our possession of this blessed book, we thank God for its gift, and it is our fervent and constant prayer that the time

may soon come when all men in all parts of the earth shall possess it, understand it and obey it.

We begin this church as practical believers and defenders of the great Protestant principle of the right of private judgment in matters of faith. We yield up our right to understand and interpret the sacred Scriptures for ourselves, and to believe as we see evidence to preponderate this way or that, to no man or any number of men, to no Church, or Council, Synod or Assembly. We think we are answerable to God alone for the faith we adopt, or the faith we reject, and that man has no power to meddle in the case. And we trust that from this place no man or woman will be denounced for their faith in Christ, be that faith what it may. And ere one such Anathema should be uttered within these walls, we pray they may crumble to their foundations.

We build this church in perfect charity, we hope with Christendom and the world,—for we build it as christians; and christians should love not only one another, but mankind. We wish indeed that our own peculiar opinions should every where prevail, for we believe them to be the pure, undoubted truth of God; but we would not make one convert by violence, or the sacrifice of peace. An overheated zeal has been a principal source of the miseries the church has endured. Christian sects have been willing to propagate their opinions at any cost, from mistaken ideas of their importance. They have forced, not followed providence. May we avoid their error; and though persuaded that our opinions are true, and important as true, and must ultimately prevail, let us not hasten too fast, but wait the fit concurrence of times and circumstances. God watches over his truth as he does over his material creation, and in his own time, and in his own way will raise it to honour and a universal empire.

And now, brethren, I use the words of another on a similar occasion: let us depart from this spot—from this moment holy ground, set apart henceforth from ordinary uses, and consecrated to things divine. Where the heavens now swell above us, declaring their Maker's glory, shall soon be interposed a roof of human workmanship, beneath which shall be declared the bright glory of his redeeming love. It shall intercept the light of yonder sun, whose beams shall no more fall upon this place, but the more reviving beams of the sun of righteousness shall rest there without a cloud. The dews of night shall come down on this spot no more, and the winds of the ocean shall henceforth be excluded, but the dews of divine grace, as we trust, shall plenteously visit it, and the gentle breathings of the Holy Spirit shall never cease to shed upon it life and peace. And from this place, where now perhaps for the first time the voice of christian worship has ascended to heaven, there shall go up generation after generation, to the end of time, incense and a pure offering from multitudes of humble and believing hearts.

ON THE CEREMONY OF CONFIRMATION.

To the Editor.

SIR,

THE rite of Confirmation is an important part and parcel of that religious system, known by the name the Church of England. Indeed without it, the solemn rite of Baptism, if not rendered completely nugatory, would be much less "wholesome" and efficacious. Hence it is a favourite ceremony with the true sons of good mother church; on its behalf are her clergy unremitting in their exertions, and hence do spiritual Lords, make the tour of their respective dioceses, to receive the rising generation, with due episcopal benignity into the pale of salvation, as established by act of parliament.

A series of questions and replies, (an examination of which, is the object of this communication) published seemingly for the benevolent purpose of aiding and assisting, those weak minds, who have hardly "arrived at years of discretion" having been extensively circulated in this county; as Confirmation seems of late to have been the ecclesiastical order of the day, and as thousands have during the past year been duly accepted and blessed, by his Grace of Chester; it must be allowed that this important part of the machinery of an established hierarchy, assumes an imposing station, and therefore that an investigation of its principles and consequences, may not be mistimed or improper. In truth notwithstanding its popularity, and in spite of the labors of so many pious and erudite advocates of this rite, it does not appear to be generally understood, and amongst the crowds who assemble at stated periods, to be *confirmed*, very different, nay opposite feelings are manifested. While one views it with reverence and awe, another considers it a matter of indifference; by some it is regarded in a manner which to say the least, is highly tinged with superstitious feelings; whilst others, governed perhaps by the influence of general custom, the control of parents, or the authority of ghostly directors, are utterly careless of all that passes, nor deem it necessary to devote one single moment to the serious consideration of that ceremony, in which they are called to participate.

Although therefore it may savor of the pride of worldly wisdom, for an anonymous writer presumptuously to meddle with a subject which has occupied the attention of many most grave and learned personages, yet as unfortunately, correct and definite opinions are not generally entertained, but rather on this subject error, or ignorance, is prevalent, the attempt it is hoped may be forgiven, to produce at least amongst such of the readers of the Christian Reflector, as have not attended to the subject, a correct opinion of the church of England rite of Confirmation, of its real tendency, and tremendous results, which is the design of

A DISSENTER.

ON CONFIRMATION.

Q. What is Confirmation?

A. It is taking upon myself and ratifying the solemn promise and vow made by my sponsors in my name at Baptism.

Q. What authority have we for the use of this rite;

A. The example of the apostles, and the practice of the church of Christ from the beginning.

Q. You say that confirmation is ratifying your baptismal vow, tell me how many things your godfathers and godmothers, then promised for you;

A. Three.

Q. What is the first?

A. "That I should renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh."

Q. Who is the Devil?

A. The prince of the fallen angels.

Q. What are his works?

A. All sin in general; but especially pride and envy, hatred and malice, lying and slandering, tempting men to sin and cruelty.

Q. What is it to renounce the Devil and his works?

A. It is to forsake and oppose them.

Q. Why are you to renounce the Devil?

A. Because he is the great enemy of God and of my salvation.

Q. Why are you to renounce his works?

A. Because they are evil, and lead to death.

Q. What do you understand by the pomps and vanity of this wicked world?

A. Excess in dress, the vain amusements and sinful customs of the world, and whatever is opposed to christian humility and moderation.

Q. Are you commanded to renounce these?

A. St. John says, "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world 1 John. ii. 15, 16.

Q. What do you mean by the flesh?

A. The wickedness of our nature.

Q. Are all born in sin?

A. Yes: "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." John. iii. 6.

Q. What are the sinful lusts of the flesh?

A. "The lusts of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication," &c. passage in full. Gal. v. 19 21.

Q. Why are you to renounce these sinful lusts of the flesh?

A. "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Gal. v. 21. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." Rom viii. 13.

Q. What is the second part of your baptismal vow?

A. That I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith.

Q. Where are these articles to be found?

A. In the Holy Scriptures.

Q. Are they not briefly summed up, in some part of the Catechism?

A. Yes, in the apostles' creed.

Q. Repeat this Creed?

A. "I believe in God the Father Almighty, &c."

Q. "What do you chiefly learn from the articles of your belief?"

A. "First I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world. Secondly in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind. Thirdly in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect people of God."

Q. Is faith necessary to salvation?

A. Yes.

Q. Can you prove this from Scripture?

A. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." John iii. 36.

Q. How does faith save?

A. As uniting us to Christ, in whom "God has given to us eternal life."

Q. What is the faith which saves?

A. It is such a trust in the mercy of God, and the merits of Christ as purifies the heart, and produces newness of life.

Q. What is the third thing, which your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for you at your baptism?

A. "That I should keep God's Holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life."

Q. How many commandments are there?

A. Ten.

Q. How are they divided?

A. Into two tables.

Q. What do you learn from the first?

A. My duty towards God.

Q. What is your duty towards God?

A. "My duty towards God, is to believe in him, to fear him, and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name, and his word and to serve him truly all the days of my life?"

Q. What do you learn from the second?

A. My duty towards my neighbour.

Q. What is your duty towards your neighbour?

A. "My duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself, and to do

unto all men as I would they should do unto me. To love, honor and succour my father and mother. To honour and obey the king; and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt nobody by word or deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart. To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering. To keep my body in temperance soberness and chastity. Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labor truly to get my own living, and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me."

Q. Now do you think yourself bound to renew this solemn promise and vow, that was made in your name at your baptism?

A. I do.

Q. Are you willing to ratify and confirm the same in your own person, before God and the congregation?

A. "By God's help so I will, and I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end."

Q. Is not confirmation a serious thing?

A. Yes, for it is solemnly giving myself up to the service of God.

Q. In what state of mind should you come to it?

A. In humble prayer, faith and thankfulness.

Q. What benefits may you expect, if you come in this way?

A. To receive an increase of knowledge, faith and love, and to have my purposes of leading a godly life strengthened and confirmed.

Q. What should be your conduct after confirmation?

A. I should remember that I am dedicated to God, and that is my duty to serve him in truth and righteousness, all the days of my life.

Q. What encouragement have you to continue steadfast in his service?

A. The promise of remission of sins through Christ, of God's favor and blessing in this life, and of eternal life in the next.

Q. Prove this from Scripture?

A. If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." 1 Tim. iv. 8.

Remarks on the Above.

Q. What is Confirmation?

A. It is taking upon myself and ratifying the solemn promise and vow made by sponsors in my name at baptism. (a)

The answer here supplied, does not comprize all that is requisite; in order to obtain a complete definition, it will be necessary to adduce two trivial points, (from the order of Confirmation) which have perhaps been overlooked on account of their insignificance.

(a) This was not always the signification of Confirmation even in the mouth of a Church of Englandist, since the personally taking upon, the personal ratification of the baptismal vow, was not introduced into the order until after the restoration of Charles II. when the Liturgy was revised by Convocation.

1. That the Bishop in solemn prayer asserts, that the "Almighty and everlasting God, has vouchsafed to regenerate his servants by water and the Holy Ghost, and has given unto them forgiveness for all their sins, &c."

2. The Bishop likewise says, "We make our humble supplications unto thee, for these thy servants, upon whom (after the example of thy holy apostles,) we have now laid our hands to certify them (by this sign,) of thy favor and gracious goodness towards them."

Now as it would be highly uncourteous, even to suspect a Lord Bishop of using language having a tendency to deceive, the question "what is Confirmation?" ought to be thus answered by the catechumen: It is taking upon myself, and ratifying, the solemn promise and vow, made by sponsors in my name at baptism, by which vow I am called to a state of salvation, (*b*) and by participating in this ceremony, I am certified of the favor and gracious goodness of God towards me, and have given to me, forgiveness for all my sins.

Certainly that man possesses no ordinary share of superstitious credulity, who can for a moment imagine, that the rite of Confirmation confers these important privileges. And by what process are they obtained? Why, an unconscious infant, is introduced within the walls of some consecrated edifice, yeilded a church, accompanied by a few kind friends, (the parents are kindly excepted on account it is presumed of incapacity;) to record a solemn promise and vow in its behalf, the assistance of a reverend Priest, is obtained, to sprinkle its face with water, accompanying the action with the proper form of words, appointed to be then said, (not sung,) and lo, simple as all this may appear to carnal minds, (yet from its effects it must be considered an incomprehensible mystery,) the child of human depravity, born in sin &c. is transformed into "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." (*c*)

Then to make assurance doubly sure, this child when arrived at "years of discretion," (mark that!) may reap the advantages arising from Confirmation, which are obtained, easily enough in truth, by repeating by rote, in the mother tongue, "the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments," and by answering "such other questions as in the short Catechisms are contained."

Foolish indeed are Dissenters, who obstinately reject this comfortable path, by which to travel to the church of England gate of heaven! What headstrong folly do they not exhibit in perversely running the risk of being damned, by refusing this broad and capacious way which leadeth unto life? a way which is so smooth and easy; which eludes the tremendous denuncia-

(*b*) See the Catechism of the Church of England.

(*c*) Catechism.

tion of the athanasian creed itself ; destroys the obstacles which arise from a diversity of doctrinal belief, but without any belief or opinion at all, so that the outward ritual be duly observed, will confer heaven and happiness on the vilest of sinners, equally with the purest of saints.

Producing such all-important effects, who will deny that this rite, as "the order of confirmation" has it, "is very convenient to be observed?"

Such then being the nature of confirmation and so glorious the effects which it produces, we are naturally anxious to be informed, upon what grounds its pretensions are founded, what authority exists for the investing it with such saving, power ; where the scripture testimony is recorded ; and expect that in proportion to its importance, will be the clearness and strength of the proofs by which it is substantiated.

Hence the next question is one of intense interest,

Q. "What authority have we for the use of this rite?"

A. "The example of the apostles and the practice of the church of Christ from the beginning."

And is this all the evidence, which the confessedly important rite rests upon? Its authority, the very thing we want proved, is taken for granted, although involving such important consequences. Surely that importance well deserved some few, of the no doubt numerous proofs, which are in existence. The omission is an unfortunate one, for it cannot be reasonably expected that any thinking person dare allow himself to place his hopes of salvation upon his simple participation in a rite, when he is left in the dark as to the authority upon which he may rest those hopes. He may doubt—he may suspect that there is no authority at all for such an expectation, and if he does, he cannot reasonably be blamed, for salvation is so important that it behoves every one to be cautious on the subject.

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS AT WIGAN.

No. I.

"It is my earnest desire to keep close to the great condition of an upright witness, the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. And as far as I know it, by the blessing of God, I will."

THE controversy between the Unitarians and Trinitarians of Wigan, which has been going on from the close of the year 1823, if I recollect right, to within a month or two of the present

time has been terminated by the clamorous, and boisterous vociferations, by the laughing, sneering, and calumniating, of the Trinitarians mistaken by them for arguments. We have had a sufficient opportunity of seeing how these doughty, brave and illustrious champions have looked in the Bear's paw room, which has produced in us a great desire, Mr. Editor, by your leave, to see how they will look on paper. Perhaps when we come to view them in a different light, and standing on a different ground they will appear to us much more engaging; but if not, we must then take our final leave of them, until something happens to improve them. If nothing of this kind should happen the same reason by which we have been induced to withdraw from these angry men will certainly operate against a renewal of acquaintance. The Unitarians of Wigan are desirous that some lasting monument might be erected to perpetuate the glory of those orthodox polemics, whose most powerful weapons I have alluded to above; a monument, on which also may be seen inscribed those stubborn facts, which the foulest breath of calumny cannot tarnish, which interested witnesses cannot falsify, and which Falsehood with all its effrontery cannot invalidate, and which Orthodoxy though outrageous will never be able to outcry, outbrazen, or outbrave. The Trinitarians, it seems, are desirous that we should publish some account of these discussions in which nothing by them on our side of the question has been discussed. I said they *seem* desirous of this, I dare not use a more positive term for fear of misrepresenting them. They, like children in the dark, whistle aloud to bear their courage up. If they fancy that they have examined our arguments and confuted them, closely traced our reasonings and opposed the fallacy of them, as most of what they then delivered was from written documents (quere written by themselves?) their work will be easy; we shall no doubt see them confronting argument with argument, reason with reason, following us up closely, clearly and methodically. On the various topics which we have argued with them, of course they will directly fix their attention and place in opposition to them those much more strong, clear and forcible reasonings, by which they boast of having confuted us. In doing this they will

give their readers a view at once of both sides of the question and confirm their boasted superiority. I have already received a message from one of their party, assuring me that their answer is ready. Now this I call clever, this is uncommonly dexterous, as when I received this message I had not commenced my statement. What chance have we with men who know, or pretend to know before we open our mouths what we are about to say, or before we draw our pens what we are going to write? I would advise them not to talk thus, there may be some danger in it, some risk run of getting into a dilemma; at any rate it proves that to prejudge a case is with them no new or uncommon thing. If their answer be ready now, of course it will be the earlier forthcoming: or they may publish it now and entitle it "a reply to a statement about to be made of the Wigan controversial meetings;" and if there should be found a remarkably striking coincidence and agreement in the subjects, order, &c. of the reply published first, to the statement published afterwards, it will go near to prove that prophetic character to which they have so often made no very remote pretention. It may be necessary just to notice for the sake of our more distant friends, who may have heard of these meetings, but have had no opportunity of attending them, their origin, as far as my knowledge goes, I believe they derived their origin from a reading and conversation Society, held in the vestry of the Unitarian meeting-house, Park Lane, from which sprang up a kind of friendly theological debate, conducted with good temper by those whose object was truth not victory. The sound of these meetings got buzzed abroad, and whether from any formal invitation on the part of the Unitarians, or from that alarm which seized the orthodox on the announcement of such meetings, or from a wish to distinguish themselves in the polemic field, and to acquire some little popularity which could not otherwise be obtained, or as the sworn enemies of Unitarianism, or as the sincere inquirers after, and lovers of Truth, or urged on solely by an overweening conceit of the goodness of their cause, the justice of their sentiments, and strength of their powers; or by whatever other motive I know not, but some Trinitarians did come forward to withstand the believers in the One God, the

worshippers of the Father of all, in one person, in spirit and in truth, and to contend most earnestly against that faith which I believe was once delivered to the saints by Jesus Christ the great servant and messenger of God. The Trinitarians were headed by a man whose mental construction, like the human face, in some instances, defies the painter's skill of delineation. My friends will therefore excuse my not attempting it, especially as I conceive, that in the prominent part which he has taken in these disputations he has best delineated himself. I shall then therefore leave the reader to form his opinion of him and of the rest of the Dramatic persons from those acts in which they have appeared in their most natural character. These Park Lane meetings had soon created so strong a sensation that the place of worship was from all quarters crowded to an unpleasant excess, and numbers could not enter, such was the force of novelty that many attended, who I believe would not attend any place to hear a serious discourse. The Trinitarian leader soon perceived what best pleased the many, and with singular adroitness immediately took what to him appeared the vantage ground. Having thus entrenched himself, and possessing a considerable fund of low wit, and quaint sayings, which I suppose he has gathered from his most familiar authors and preachers, he mounted his punning artillery and seeing by the effect produced that wit succeeded much better than argument, he never lost sight of it himself, and trained others in the use of his unhallowed weapons. Seeing that our opponent was determined to follow up this mode of warfare he was sometimes attacked with his own weapons, but only in cases of necessity, when to reason was of no use ; for reason was often circumstanced as Jesus was when prejudice refused him a hearing but laughed him to scorn. I do not know whether it was wise to shoot at our adversary, as John Bungan says he shot the devil, with his own bow : but this I know that when you have Hobson's choice you must ride the horse left for you or not ride at all. I know the person who adopted this plan has been censured for the manner in which he conscientiously discharged his duty at these meetings by those who are not quite sure how they themselves would have acted, had they filled his place ; and he

may yet be censured by those who think censure is their part but who will not give themselves time to learn that the propriety of an action depends upon circumstances and that they are no proper judges untill they are well acquainted with them.

J. R.

Hindley.

STRICTURES ON DR. WARDLAW'S REMARKS ON THE INFLUENCE OF UNITARIANISM, IN REFERENCE TO SUPPOSED UNITARIAN CONFORMISTS TO TRINITARIANISM.

To the Editor.

SIR,

IT has been affirmed by Unitarians, and I think, truly, that there are many in the ranks of Trinitarians who disbelieve the Trinity, and entertain the opposite sentiment* They have referred to the fact, and very justly, as decidedly in their favour, shewing the secret, though gradual, operation of truth in the haunts of error; but Dr. Wardlaw sometime ago, with all the adroitness of an artful polemic, endeavoured to turn it to their disadvantage. And as I do not recollect that his remarks have been replied to, either in any periodical publication, or otherwise, I shall attempt, with your permission, to shew, that they are at least inconclusive, if not sophistical. I could have wished that some other, and more able person had undertaken the task; but as this has not been the case, I shall venture upon it myself.

The remarks to which I allude appeared in the Manchester Gazette for February 5th, 1825; and are as follow:

“Of the number who may secretly hold the sentiments whilst they have not honesty† enough to avow them, it would be pre-

* In the time of Lindsey, (Apology, 5th ed. p. 193,) there were “many persons in the church known to be ill at ease with regard to the *great object of worship*,” and inquiry, since his day, cannot have made the *reflecting* portion of the Trinitarian denomination better satisfied with the absurdities of the Trinity.

† “Let those only blame and condemn who know what it is to *doubt*; to be in perplexity about things of highest importance.” Lindsey’s Apology, p. 184. Dr. Wardlaw knows not the difficulty—the pain of conquering Trinitarian prejudice and emancipating the mind from Trinitarian thralldom. I do; and I can tell him that his censure is as cruel, as it is unjust. But his system is cruel, and he is therefore excusable.

sumptuous and uncharitable† to speak. I will only say this, that if the Unitarians are at all disposed to boast themselves of such and to exaggerate their numerical amount, they pay their own principles but a left-handed compliment. The persons in question, be the number large or small, are "Unitarians" in sentiment; and with "Unitarianism" therefore, in this case, the charge of insincerity must lie, not with orthodoxy. It says but little for their principles that they have not force enough to make them honest men; and we make the Unitarian body most heartily welcome to as many hypocrites as they may choose to fancy belongs to them. In proportion as they multiply the number of such, they sink the credit of their principles."

Dr. Wardlaw, in the above, evidently triumphs; and he thinks his triumph complete. But what is the real state of the case;—as the Doctor represents it? I think not; and instead of the language of triumph, he might justly have adopted that of lamentation; yes, for himself, and his brethen and the cause which they advocate. For this unjustifiable conformity, which the Doctor designates "dishonest and hypocritical," is not to be attributed to Unitarianism but Trinitarianism. And I think, may very easily be proved; not merely asserted, like the Doctor's specious charge.

I would, however, first observe, that if I use Dr. Wardlaw's offensive expressions, in reference to the persons alluded to, I use them only by the way of argument; taking the Doctor on his own ground and shewing, from his own suppositions, the fallacy of his conclusions.

I think the individuals themselves are more to be pitied, than blamed. They are the victims of a pernicious influence, arising from the Trinitarian System; and it will be to this only that my remarks will apply.

† The "presumption" and "uncharitableness" did not consist in speaking of the "number" of these persons, but in calling in question their "honesty." Here we have "presumption" and "uncharitableness" with a witness! Yet the Dr. would not be thought to be guilty of such heinous sins. How hard is it for Trinitarians to be candid! They are perfectly right;—"their best deeds have the nature of sin;" "their good works are as filthy rags."

Having thus premised, I now proceed to the proof.

And, first, this unjustifiable conformity is not to be attributed to Unitarianism. The persons in question, have not imbibed the whole of the Unitarian doctrines. They are Unitarians only so far as regards the belief of the simple unity of God in one person in contradistinction to the belief of three distinct divine persons in the Godhead.* If they had embraced the whole of the Unitarian sentiments, it would have been impossible for them to remain in conformity to the Trinitarian system; because their feelings would naturally have recoiled from it, as at once dishonourable to God, and pernicious to man.

Our Saviour's maxim may very justly be applied in this case. "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other." The Unitarian and the Trinitarian systems are so diametrically opposite in their principles, that if we admire the one we must naturally feel a strong repugnance to the other. The God that is one and yet three, three and yet one, is not the God that is strictly one. The God who implicates the innocent with the guilty, and punishes the innocent in the place and stead of the guilty, is not the God who declares, that "the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. The soul that sinneth it shall die." "The God who rigorously exacts an atonement from an innocent sufferer for the sins of his creatures, is not the God who is willing to receive and pardon those creatures, whenever they will repent and turn to him." The God who condemns millions of his creatures, long before they came into existence, to everlasting perdition, "for the praise of his *vin-*

*The above may be considered the strict meaning of the term Unitarian, though it is also constantly used in reference to other doctrines.

It is somewhat remarkable, though not surprising, that Trinitarians, anxious to avoid the charge of *Tritheism*, frequently lay claim to the appellation Unitarian, as their exclusive right. But in order to suit them, it must have *Tri* prefixed to it, to make *Tre-unitarian*, and give the threefold signification of their doctrine; for it does not express it of itself. They say they believe in the *Unity*. Would it not be more correct to say the *Union*. For it is not strict *oneness* that they believe, but *unity-plurality*; or, in plain terms, an absolute contradiction.

dictive justice," is not the God whose distinctive appellation is love ; and whose will is, that " not one of his little ones should perish." The God that teaches his creatures to despise and condemn good works, is not the God that requires his creatures " to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before him," and " by well doing to seek for glory, honor, and immortality." The God that teaches his creatures to decry, and dread, and avoid reason, as dangerous to their eternal welfare, is not the God that teaches his creatures diligently to exercise their reason, in order that they may understand his will concerning them, and render him a " reasonable service."*

The former is the God of Trinitarians ; the latter is the God of Unitarians. The conclusion therefore is inevitable ; that real Unitarians can have no sympathy with the Trinitarian system. It is absolutely impossible ; as impossible, as that a man, at the very same time, should love beauty and deformity, rationality and absurdity, mercy and vindictiveness, equity and injustice, good and evil. For the Unitarian and the Trinitarian systems are exactly characterized by these opposite qualities. Therefore, the persons in question are not *thorough* Unitarians ; and their unjustifiable conformity is not to be attributed to the Unitarian faith.

But Dr. Wardlaw would seem to forget, that if Unitarianism cannot " make them honest men," Trinitarianism cannot, even in its *immediate influence*. They are cherished in its bosom ; they have been so cherished from their earliest infancy ; yet Dr. Wardlaw says, they are not " honest men !" Does not this evince a lamentable deficiency of sterling religious principle in the Trinitarian system ! Why does it suffer them to rest in ease, when acting contrary to conviction ? Why does it cherish, what Dr. Wardlaw calls, " hypocrites ?" Why does it not alarm their consciences, and arouse them to a sense of their awful state ? Why does it not tell them to act uprightly, though in opposition to itself ? Why does it not say to them at once, let me have your open hostility, and not your professions of friendship under the guise of hypocrisy ?

And by which system is it reasonable to suppose, they should be most governed—that under whose *immediate influence* they are ? or that whose influence operates upon them *remotely* ? Unitarianism " make them honest men," indeed ! It has not a fair chance. Let them come to it, and the case will be fully proved. Let them breathe its pure atmosphere, and *only* this, and they will manifest that glow of health which is peculiar to

* If Trinitarians say, that " God does not teach them to despise and condemn good works," and " to decry, and dread, and avoid reason ;" of whom do they learn such doctrines ? of man ; or of some evil being, who is the enemy of righteousness ! For they undoubtedly believe them.

its salubrity. But so long as they live in the noxious atmosphere of Trinitarianism, what can we expect to behold but weak and sickly frames? For I take it, that persons who as Dr. Wardlaw says, are not "honest men," but "hypocrites" are, in a moral and religious sense, weak and sickly. Yet the Dr. and his brethren in the faith, (for he speaks in the plural) in their overflowing goodness, would "make the Unitarian body heartily welcome" to these! What noble disinterestedness! what pure benevolence? They first bring these hapless creatures, by their empiric practices, to the brink of the grave; and then they would resign them to the care of those, who, they have no doubt, would make sure work of destruction! Well, let them come; they may yet be healed. "There is balm in Gilead."

In my next, I shall introduce to the Dr's. notice some examples of integrity and disinterestedness, which I trust will be sufficient to show that Unitarianism has strength and vigor enough, when cordially and fully embraced, to raise her disciples above all worldly considerations. And shall then proceed to prove that it is against orthodoxy the charge of insincerity lies in its full force.

A DISSENTER FROM TRINITARIANISM.

A LETTER

Addressed to Dr. Blomfield, Bishop of Chester.

MY LORD BISHOP,

I have just risen from the perusal of your Letter, addressed to Charles Butler, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn, and am sorry that your Lordship has grievously violated a rule which you wish to impose upon your antagonist.

You commence, my Lord, by regretting that Mr. Butler should make one single deviation from what you consider to be truth, and that he should be so ungentlemanly as to throw out innuendoes unfavorable to the sincerity of the Episcopalian clergy. You seem to have felt the force of these innuendoes rather keenly, and you express yourself in a warm and manly manner. With the dispute between your Lordship and Mr. Butler, I have nothing to do; but I very much regret that, whilst you charge your opponent with untruth and calumny, you should be guilty of the same faults, and put me to the painful necessity of expostulating with the Expostulator. You say (p. 5.) that Firebrands and poisoned arrows are implements of warfare, which are now scarcely to be found but in the armoury of atheism and infidelity. This assertion may be true generally, but your Lordship is certainly an exception from it:—and an exception which reflects very great discredit upon your liberality of mind and urbanity of manner. Strong as this statement may appear, it is no less true

on that account. That neither your Lordship nor our readers may misunderstand me, I shall transcribe your own words as they appear in your Letter to Mr. Butler, p. 11. 2 Ed. 1825. Having in decided terms contradicted the charge brought by Mr. Butler against the sincerity of the Episcopalian clergy, and after distinctly stating that the "great body of Protestant Dissenters" are fully agreed with you in belief, you annex the following words in a note:—

"I do not admit the truth of what Dr. Milner says, that most of the old stock of Presbyterians and Independants are now Socinians; many of the Meeting-houses which were formerly occupied by Presbyterians are now, I acknowledge, in the hands of Unitarian Congregations, (who have been deluded into Unitarianism by the most disingenuous artifices on the part of some of their preachers,) but a great number of the descendants of the old Presbyterians have entered into communion with the established church, and the number of those independant communities who have lapsed into Socinianism is, I believe, very small indeed."

Now, my Lord, this charge is offensive in the extreme, and offensive because it is unjust. The using of it has tarnished your mitre and lowered your dignity. It is the language of bigotry, and would best become a mind destitute of all liberal views and christian feeling. The Unitarians may be as the "dust in the balance" in point of numbers, when compared with some other sects, but they have not merited this unjust attack, nor is it proper that they should quietly sit down under so gross a calumny, though the calumniator be a Lord Bishop. To show how unjust this attack, is, I shall enter a little into particulars.

1. Your language is offensive and highly indecorous as it regards the *term* you give the Unitarians. You call them *Socinians*; and it is clear from the manner in which you have employed the terms Unitarianism and Socinianism in the same sentence, that your Lordship considers them as synonymous. But the Unitarians do not call themselves Socinians, nor their views of the doctrine of Christ Socinianism. They respect the memory of Socinus because he was a distinguished character and successfully, as they think, exposed many of the prevailing errors which unfortunately existed in the christian church in his day; but they have not learned their views of christianity of him, nor have they desired to be called by his name. One is their master even Christ, and to his authority alone they wish to bow in religious matters. They wish no other designation than that of christian; and though they take that of Unitarian, it is not that they are partial to it, but because the different sects in christendom, (and the established church of England is *only a sect*,) render it necessary that they should use some term descriptive of their views of religious truth. That of Unitarian appearing to them the most pro-

per, they have long since adopted it ; and as you, my Lord, can hardly be ignorant of this fact, your conduct is highly improper and censurable in calling them Socinians, and denominating their ideas of divine truth Socinianism. To give any body of people a name which they themselves disclaim is persecution, and the person who knowingly does so, is a persecutor. Had any ignorant, fiery enthusiast used such terms, I should not have wondered, but I am surprised that so enlightened a man and accomplished a scholar as Dr. Blomfield should degrade himself by the adoption of these insulting epithets. Besides, my Lord, the Unitarians do not receive all the doctrines which Socinus inculcated, because they consider that some of his views were erroneous. Socinus believed that Christ had a local ascent into heaven, where he received those grand and cheering truths which he subsequently delivered to mankind. He also maintained that Jesus Christ was the proper object of religious worship, and acted consistently with his principles. The Unitarians do not admit either of these views to be true, nor do they pay religious homage to the man Christ Jesus, who was approved of God by signs and miracles which God did by him. Probably your Lordship may say that you knew all this. If you did, then the stigma which you have endeavoured to cast upon Unitarians by calling them Socinians, is still less creditable to your good sense and good manners ; but for the sake of your own credit, my Lord, I hope you were ignorant of these facts.

2. Again, my Lord, you are pleased to assert that “a great number of the descendants of the old Presbyterians have entered into communion with the established church.” If this be really true, it marks the meanness of those characters who could so basely barter the glorious principles of Nonconformity for “the pomps and vanities” of the Establishment, and who could so forget the persecutions which their ancestors underwent, as to suffer themselves to enter a community that ever breathed proscription, fines, banishment and even death against those immortal champions of civil and religious liberty. If many of such persons have really entered into the Established Church, I wish you joy of them : they are, doubtless, a very valuable acquisition ; and believe me, the genuine descendants of the old Presbyterians can well spare them. But, my Lord, I doubt the accuracy of your assertion, and I demand better proofs than your Lordship’s *ipse dixit* though pronounced *ex Cathedra*, before I can give it credence.

3. I now proceed, my Lord, to the most offensive and the most false part of the note in question. You say that “many of the Meeting-houses which were formerly occupied by Presbyterians are now, I acknowledge in the hands of Unitarian Congregations, (WHO HAVE BEEN DELUDED INTO UNITARIANISM BY THE MOST DISINGENUOUS ARTIFICES ON THE PART OF SOME OF THEIR

PREACHERS.)" The first part of this assertion is true ; and the reason is, these congregations, to whom your Lordship alludes, have become Unitarians through the march of truth and the progress of enquiry ; and being the real descendants of the old Presbyterians, they have justly continued to worship in those places which their fathers erected in the midst of those cruel sufferings and persecutions which were so liberally heaped upon them by your Established Church. But what shall I say to your Lordship's remark, girded in by a parenthesis? What language can I use sufficiently strong to express my proper sense of its injustice and baseness? Where was your Lordship's sober judgment when you penned so notorious an untruth? Whatever you were doing or thinking, I fearlessly assert that the charge is false *in toto*. I maintain in the most decided manner, that the congregations or individuals to whom your Lordship alludes, were NEVER DELUDED into Unitarianism by their preachers, and that these preachers NEVER USED ANY DISINGENUOUS ARTIFICES to delude any of their flocks. I say further, my Lord, that the most humble of these preachers, are not inferior to your Lordship in sincerity and rectitude. True, no costly palaces enclose their dignity ; they raise no mitred fronts in courts and parliaments ; no stately equipage attends their beck ; no accumulated thousands drawn from the hard earnings of the people, fill their coffers or are expended in the adorning of extensive domains ; but as it regards ability to preach the pure gospel of Christ, fidelity and sincerity in the discharge of their arduous duties, and prosperity in their general conduct and conversation, they have not been excelled, as a body, by the brightest ornaments of that church of which you are a member, and by Court favour, a Lord Bishop. But not satisfied with calumniating a body of men who in many respects, are your equals, you insult those Unitarian congregations whom you represent as having been DELUDED *by the most disingenuous artifices* on the part of some of their preachers. Degenerate, priest-ridden race! Deluded by their preachers! and deluded too by the most disingenuous artifices!!! If your Lordship knew the Unitarian Congregations to whom the allusion is made, I am inclined to think that *you could not fail* to discover, that there are no body of people in his Majesty's Dominions so little liable to be deluded either by their own preachers or by my Lords the Bishops. The Unitarian Congregations, my Lord, do not receive as the word of God, all which their ministers assert from the pulpit in that thing called a Sermon. They claim a right of judging for themselves, and that right they pretty generally exercise. Their motto is, "To the law and to the testimony ; if they speak not according to these, there is no light in them." Even if your Lordship, with all your honours "blushing thick" upon you, were to preach in any of the Unitarian pulpits your sermons would be closely examined both as it

regards the matter and the manner. They would consider your Lordship merely as giving your *opinion* upon any passage of scripture or point of doctrine; and whilst you delivered your sentiments, they would maintain the right of legitimate judges and decide for themselves.

Convinced of the accuracy of these remarks, I publicly call upon your Lordship either to retract the false and calumnious assertions made, or to produce fair and conclusive proofs in their support. Trusting, that your assertions have emanated from *ignorance*, I hope that your Lordship will caudidly acknowledge these errors and recall these foul calumnies, by making such a retraction as truth and justice require; but should you persevere in publishing such unjust and offensive language, I call upon you for the proof. Produce, if you can a single instance where a Unitarian minister has made use of *any* disingenous artifices to delude his flock into Unitarianism, or where the people have been so deluded. Until such proofs are produced, I shall maintain that your charge is false and calumniating in the extreme, and disgraceful for a christian bishop to publish in the nineteenth century.

Here I might properly close this letter, but there is one statement in that of your Lordship's which, though not applicable to the Unitarian body, is yet deserving of notice. In reply to Mr. Butler's innuendoes about prevarication on the part of your clergy, you say, p. 9. "You are probably not aware, Sir, how many young men of respectable abilities and acquirements enter into the ministry of the church, who have no prospect whatever of preferment, properly so called; who have no hope of obtaining more than a pittance, far inferior to that which they might have obtained, as tradesmen, farmers, or even mechanics. Will you, Sir, seriously contend that £50 or £60 a year is a bribe sufficiently large and tempting to induce a young man of education and serious habits to set his solemn testimony to the truth of that which he believes to be false? Yet I could produce to you, in my own diocese, many instances of pious, able and exemplary clergymen who are labouring in their vocation and doing the worth of an evangelist for no greater sums than these." In this argument your Lordship has stated several facts some of which are true and others the reverse. I agree with you that there are young men in your church of "respectable abilities and acquirements," and who are "pious, able and exemplary clergymen" labouring well in their vocation and adorning their profession by an upright life. I also admit that many of these exemplary characters have no more than £50 or £60 a year for these services. But what a libel is this statement of yours, my Lord, upon the generosity and brotherly kindness of the whole bench of bishops and all the other dignitaries. You, my lords the bishops and other dignitaries who do but little; you, many

of whom are shameful pluralists in defiance of all justice and decency ; you, who are not particularly distinguished for any transcendant worth or active exertions above your less fortunate brethren ; you possess all this wealth and enjoy all this luxury, whilst the poor curate, *the pious, the able and the exemplary clergyman*, labors hard in his vocation, performs the greatest part of all the useful service of your church, and has only the pitiful stipend of £50 or 60 a year!! How is this my lord? Is this the proper way for the rich dignitary to treat the *operative* clergyman? Would Jesus Christ, were he now the *visible* head of the church permit such scandalous injustice and inequalities? Does your *excellent* church behold this disproportion of reward without a blush? Excellent indeed is that church to bishops, deans, prebendaries, and such favoured children ; they live on the fat of the land ; and it would be strange ingratitude if they did not cry out “great is Diana of the Ephesians.” But the poor curate, who has almost all the labour to perform, with the scanty pittance of £50 or £60 a year, how few there are of the rich dignitaries of your church, who say with reference to such a character “God bless him.” Verily, “there is something rotten in the state of Denmark.”

Again, my Lord, you are pleased to say that “many young men of respectable abilities and acquirements enter into the ministry of the church, who have *no prospect whatever of preferment*, properly so called ; who have no hope of obtaining more than a pittance, far inferior to that which they might have obtained as tradesmen, farmers, or even as mechanics.” It must be admitted that there are unfortunately too many of those persons who have *now* no prospect whatever of preferment. They have long officiated as clergymen ; and they have lived to see young and, in some cases, nearly beardless boys pushed over their heads and admitted to that preferment to which they were not justly entitled. They have also seen that these latter have been so preferred, not because their talents, piety and virtues were so superior, but because they were the relations of lords spiritual, or the younger sons of lords temporal, or connected with lords and gentlemen who had interest in the state. But to say that these exemplary characters, whose income does not exceed £50 or £60 a year entered the church *without any prospect whatever of preferment* is, I believe, *not true*. Every young man of even common abilities upon engaging in any profession, naturally, whether justly or not, hopes to excel, to rise to eminence, and to obtain those honours and that wealth which superior skill, energy and industry ever merit, when properly applied. This, I have no doubt, has been the case with the poor clergymen in your lordship’s diocese. They fondly expected that though they commenced their ministry as *curates*, they should in time obtain some preferment. But they have had no kind patrons,

nor any powerful friends at court ; they have experienced those delays and that neglect which make the heart sick, they have been outstripped in the chase after honour and emolument by the more successful address of probably inferior men but aided by wealthy patrons ; and they have *NOW no prospect whatever of preferment* until that day when a just and righteous judge will “look with equal eye” both upon the poor curate and the lordly bishop, and prefer every man, not according to his earthly rank, power or situation, but according to the integrity of his heart and the rectitude of his conduct.

I am, my Lord,
Your Lordship's Obedient Servant,
CAMBER.

Jan. 6th. 1826.

POETRY.

THE DEPARTURE OF FRIENDS.

BY J. MONTGOMERY.

Friend after friend departs :

Who hath not lost a friend ?
There is no union here of hearts
That finds not here an end ;
Were this frail world our final rest,
Living or dying, none were blest.

Beyond the flight of time,
Beyond the reign of death,
There surely is some blessed clime
Where life is not a breath ;
Nor life's affections transient fire,
Whose sparks fly upwards and expire !

There is a world above,
Where parting is unknown ;
A long eternity of love
Formed for the good alone ;
And faith beholds the dying here
Translated to that glorious sphere !

Thus star by star declines,
Till all are past away ;
As morning high and higher shines
To pure and perfect day :
Nor sink those stars in empty night,
But hide themselves in heaven's own
light.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We must apologize to *M.* for the absence of his lines this month ; also to several other Correspondents. We have been obliged to put aside some articles that were already in preparation, to give place to *Camber's* letter to the Bishop of Chester, which we were unwilling to postpone ; it bears date early in the month, but did not come to hand till the month had considerably elapsed.

We once more request our Correspondents to favor us with their communications as early in the month as they can make it convenient.

We thank our friend who favoured us with Mr. Mulock's letters ; but we deem a review of them unnecessary ; the opinions we think too strong for modern Calvinists, and too objectionable for any but those who are gone very far in religious madness, and are incapable of contemplating God in the light of a good and a just being. Mr. M. has sublimed even upon Mr. Thom's system of monopoly. We almost think that if the *iron-hearted* Genevese Reformer were to rise from the dead, he would say to these his sons, “you go too far, you indeed drive my system to its legitimate consequences, but it will not do ; if we show the “cloven foot of Reprobation,” we shall drive men into the ranks of infidels, or send those who are not really strong in the faith, and fully persuaded of their election, to people the mad-houses.”

F. B. Wright, Printer, Swift's Court, Castle Street Liverpool.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

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MARCH, 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

The Charge that God punishes the Children for the sins of the parents fully disproved, and the justice of the Most High God vindicated.

It is too common for commentators on the sacred writings, on the authority of a very few texts, badly translated, and ill understood, to admit as a principle both of Judaism and of Christianity, that God does punish the innocent for the sins of the guilty; or, in other words, that children are punished by God for the sins of their parents. This is a crime at which a man who has any regard for his character would shudder, could he but think himself capable of committing it. And shall man be more just than God?—Shall God be charged with conduct, that would disgrace one of his erring creatures? Surely not; let God be true, even should all men be found unjust.

The reader's attention is requested to the following illustration of a passage in the New Testament, in which Jesus Christ is supposed to teach this doctrine.

LUKE XI, 49—51.

Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: that the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, it shall be required of this generation.

FROM this passage some conclude, that the Jews of that age were to be accountable for all the innocent blood which was

shed, even from Abel down to that very day. Here I observe that this interpretation is directly contrary to the plain declaration of God, which saith, that the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, Ezek. xviii. 20. I observe further, that the mistake here lies in misapplying the term generation to signify the men of that age among the Jews, and so the word does indeed signify in many passages of scripture; but then it is to be also observed, that the term generation does very often signify not the men of one age, but a set of men that have lived in all ages, from the beginning of the world to the end of all time. In other words, a set of men of such characters, or such dispositions of mind, or thus and thus circumstanced. And this is such a manifest truth, that I suppose it cannot be spoken against. However, I shall give some instances, that the meanest capacity may discern the truth. Solomon mentioneth four such generations in a very little compass, in these words: there is a generation that curseth their father, and doth not bless their mother. There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness. There is a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! and their eyelids are lifted up. There is a generation whose teeth are as swords, and their jaw-teeth as knives, to devour the poor from off the earth, and the needy from among men. Thus it is manifest that these cursing self-conceited, proud and cruel generations, have lived in all generations, from the beginning of the world down to this day; and in the holy scripture we read of two generations, which takes in the whole world in all ages: whereof one is called a chosen generation; and the generation of God's children; and the generation of the righteous. And the other generation is called a generation of vipers; and an untoward generation. These two generations are sometimes called the children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one.

The generation then which Christ calls this generation, of whom all the innocent blood should be required were not the Scribes and Pharisees of that time only, but the whole race of persecutors in all ages, which had the same disposition of heart and mind as the Pharisees had. I observe, that these words of

Christ are directly levelled against the vain boast of the Pharisees, who built the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous ; and said, if we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. As if Christ should say, ye have little reason to boast of your being better than your fathers ; they indeed killed the prophets, but you are doing worse, you are seeking to kill me who am the Lord of the prophets, and by whose spirit they were all inspired. Truly ye are their children, for ye allow of their evil deeds, ye tread in their steps ; ye outwardly appear righteous, but inwardly are full of ravening and wickedness, and so were your fathers which killed the prophets : ye are full of superstition, so were they : ye strain at gnats and swallow camels, so did they : ye have a form of godliness, but you deny the power of it : ye pay tithes of mint, annise, and cummin, but you omit judgment, mercy and faith, which are the weightier matters of the law ; and thus did your fathers, who cried in time past, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these : but these lying words did not profit them, nor your superstition will not profit you. Ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell ? Verily I say unto you, that all the righteous blood that ever was shed in the world shall be required of this generation, viz. this generation of which you are a part, but not the whole. Thus our Lord exposes the wickedness, as well as folly of the Pharisees, in boasting of themselves as being better than their fathers ; when, indeed, they had the same persecuting spirit, and never ceased their malice, rage, and fury against Christ, until with wicked hands they crucified and slew him. And indeed, all persecutors in all ages have been of one spirit, of one image and likeness ; they have always had a form of godliness, and have always denied the power of it. They have been staunch for uniformity, but always cool and indifferent about sincerity. Their religion is all outside ; or rather, all outside and no religion. It is no wonder then that the ever blessed Jesus should call them this generation when he was speaking to a notorious part of them. All persecutors are of one pedigree, stock and genealogy ; they are

of their father the devil, and the lusts of their father they will do as Christ told the murdering Jews in his day. Hence our Lord, and John the baptist, very properly calls them generation of vipers, as being the children of the old serpent the devil. And seeing they have shed all the righteous blood from Abel, down to this day, why should it seem strange that it should be required of them, and that they should be called a generation.

A New Year's Gift, humbly offered to the consideration of all the 30th of January Preachers, &c, &c. By Amos Harrison. Second Edition, 1742.

STRICTURES ON DR. WARDLAW'S REMARKS ON THE INFLUENCE OF UNITARIANISM, IN REFERENCE TO SUPPOSED UNITARIAN CONFORMISTS TO TRINITARIANISM.

(Continued from page, 42.)

To the Editor.

SIR,

Agreeably to the promise concluding my last, I would beg leave to present to the notice of Dr. Wardlaw, certain plain facts, in opposition to his charge, supported only by assertions. And I would ask him, if he ever heard of such a person as Lindsey? Had Unitarianism "force enough to make him an honest man," when he resigned the vicarage of Catterick and had nothing but "the world before him; and providence for his guide?" Did the Doctor know, too, that a considerable portion of Unitarian Ministers, for some time past, were formerly Trinitarian Ministers? Did he know that they had nothing to gain, in a worldly point of view, by their change of sentiment, but the obloquy of those from whom they seceded? Must he not have been aware, that nothing but truth and a good conscience could have induced them to leave the crowded ranks, the powerful patronage, and the rich emoluments of a popular religion, to join a sect comparatively few in numbers, and every where spoken against? Had he heard of two celebrated converts to Unitarianism in India; the Rev. W. Adam, formerly a Trinitarian Baptist Missionary; and Rammohun Roy, formerly a Hindoo Brahmin? Had he been apprised that converts were

frequently making from Trinitarianism to Unitarianism, in every rank in life, and under circumstances every way calculated to prove integrity of heart? Had he heard of a Congregation of Trinitarians at Newchurch Rossendale, becoming Unitarians, from merely reading the scriptures? And had he been informed of their open avowal of what they believed to be the truth, and their zealous exertions to promote its interests, in the midst of obloquy and persecution?

If he *knew* these things, (and how could he *not* know them?) to what must we attribute his sneer at Unitarianism, that it "had not force enough to make honest men?" "Honest men" will duly appreciate his motives.

Besides, Unitarianism teaches that every individual is *himself* responsible for his own actions; and that it is in vain to think of obtaining the Divine favour, and being accepted hereafter, but by "maintaining good works." Consequently, it is impossible thoroughly to imbibe it, and not be prompted to walk uprightly in the sight of God.

Having, as I trust, vindicated Unitarianism from the charge of encouraging insincerity in those who believe it; I shall now reverse the Doctor's position; and shall endeavour to shew, that the unjustifiable conformity to Trinitarianism, by persons supposed to hold, in part, Unitarian sentiments, is to be attributed solely to reputed Orthodoxy.

And, first, it is the effect of delusion, necessarily connected with Trinitarianism. These persons have been taught to believe, that Unity and Trinity are perfectly compatible with each other. And hence they think, that, though they now believe God to be strictly one Being, yet there can be nothing wrong in joining in Trinitarian worship; for it recognizes, say they, one God; and to this one God, they affirm, their worship is exclusively directed. (*) This is all delusion; which, in part, keeps them in the ranks of Orthodoxy; but to the Trinitarian doctrine alone does it owe its existence. With Unitarianism it has no connection whatever.

(*) "I brought myself to consider," says Lindsey, "the Trinitarian forms in the Liturgy, and the *invocations* at the entrance of the *Litany*, as a threefold representation of the One God, the Father, governing all things by himself, and by his

The persons in question are retained also in Trinitarian communion, by the doctrines of original sin, and satisfaction for sin, by the sacrifice of an innocent victim. (*) To these they still cling, as to the essentials of Christianity; and without the latter in particular, they think they cannot be saved. If they found them in the Unitarian system, they might soon be expected to secede from Trinitarian congregations. But as they esteem them the most important parts of Christianity, they prefer remaining in Trinitarian conformity, to giving them up; I think they are acting most consistently with duty, in their present state of mind.

Another cause of their conformity, must be looked for in the disuse, or rather, contempt, of reason by Trinitarians. They have heard it decried from their earliest years. They have been taught to believe it carnal, and dangerous to their everlasting salvation. And it is hence, that discarding and despising reason, they do not act reasonably; and they do not see the inconsistency of their conduct. How is it possible that they should? How can they be reasonable, without reason and see (intellectually) without sight? In other words, how can effects be produced without causes?

It is hence, also, that their progress towards a more rational system of religion, is slow and tardy; and accompanied, at the

Son and Spirit; and as a *threefold* way of addressing him, as Creator and original benevolent cause of all things; as Redeemer of mankind by his Son, and their sanctifier by his Holy Spirit." Apology p. 186.

This for a time appears to have reconciled him to Trinitarian forms of worship. But he afterwards said, "Not that I now justify myself therein. Yea, rather I condemn myself." *ib.* Page 184,

(*) The doctrine of satisfaction appears to be founded on a very similar principle to that of duelism.—A man is offended by a fellow man; and he is resolved not to be reconciled, until he has received satisfaction in blood. The Creator is offended by a creature; and he is resolved not to be reconciled, until he has received satisfaction in blood. There is this difference, however, between the two cases:—The duelist confines the offence to the simple individual from whom it proceeds. The Creator implicates with the offender all mankind. The duelist wreaks his revenge on the identical offender. The Creator vents his wrath on an innocent substitute. And this is Trinitarianism! What pity is it that there should be found hearts capable of cherishing it!

But in fact, it contains within itself its own antidote. Its vindictiveness may cause a tear in the eye of benevolence; but its folly speedily wipes it away with a smile. The innocent substitute on whom the Creator's wrath is vented, is the Creator Himself! No, it is only the Creator's second person! Nay, it is only the Creator's second person's human nature? Or a part of the third part of the Creator!—What egregious trifling! What ridiculous absolute nonsense!

same time, by a thousand little fears and perplexing doubts.

Whereas, had they been accustomed to the vigorous exercise of their reasoning faculties on religious subjects, they might long ago have bidden Trinitarianism farewell; for they would then have found it impossible to believe it; as reason and the Trinitarian system are utterly incompatible with each other. But they have ever been, and still are, in part at least, hoodwinked by their teachers. And the consequence is, that they are passive conformists to a religion, which they in part disbelieve.

A further cause will be found in the manner in which they have been accustomed to study the Scriptures.—First, with reason discarded, and the understanding prostrated in the dust; that is, without intellect, without mind; as automatons go through a regular process by mechanical principles, or as parrots chatter words without ideas. (*)

Secondly, while they have been taught to regard the scriptures as the standard of truth, they have been required to interpret them according to their peculiar formularies on pain of everlasting damnation:—if of the Church of England, agreeably to the Common Prayer Book, if among the Calvinists, agreeably to Calvin's Institutes and the Westminster Assembly's Confession and Catechism; and if among the Methodists, agreeably to Wesley's Sermons. (†)

And, thirdly, while they have been admonished to depend implicitly on the teachings of the Holy Ghost, they have been told before hand what the Holy Ghost would teach; namely, what their "spiritual pastors and masters" had taught them by the terrors of eternal perdition; whether Church of Englandism, Cal-

(*) If the above be thought severe, I would beg leave to ask, what is the difference between a man who has lost his reason, and one that is out of his mind? and whether a person that is out of his mind, can be aware of what he is doing?

(†) Trinitarians do not *study* the Scriptures—they *read* them; and they read them, not to *learn* what they teach, but to be *confirmed* in their prepossessions. They are never left free. They are *tied down* to explain them in a certain way, or they will perish everlastingly. They may walk, but it must be in leading strings. "The sun may shine, but it shines in vain to them, for they have acquired the habit of shutting their eyes; or if they open them, it is only to look through glasses coloured according to the fancies of the fathers of their particular church." Aspland's Sermon on the "Causes of the Slow Progress of Christian Truth;" a Sermon which should be in the hands of every individual, whether Unitarian or Trinitarian.

vinism, Methodism, or any other *Ism* whatever. (*) Hence they have sat down to the Scriptures, and risen up from them, just as they were; "ever learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth." It is this practice, as far as they have followed it, which has hitherto deluded them, and kept their minds in darkness; and partially fettered by it at present, they remain entangled in the subtleties and perplexities of the Trinitarian doctrine. And they must continue in this state of mental captivity, until they resolve to burst the shackles that enthrall them, and study the scriptures *alone*. (†)

Another reason is, that it is not sincerity that has been inculcated upon them, as of the first importance in the religious profession; but implicit belief in certain doctrines, enforced by every thing that can alarm the mind, and frighten into submission. The former has constituted no part of their religious instruction, either public or private. The latter has continually sounded in their ears, from their earliest infancy to the present moment. Hence, they are formed with an inaptitude to religious sincerity on the one hand, and a total indifference to religious inquiry on the other. (‡) And hence their Unitarian—Trinitarian conformity.

There are other reasons yet to be adduced; but anxious not to trespass too much on the pages of the Reflector, I shall reserve these for another letter, in which I shall probably take my leave of the subject.

In the mean time, I remain,

A DISSENTER FROM TRINITARIANISM.

(*) The sin against the Holy Ghost can hardly be committed in the present day; but there is something in the above so extremely shocking, as almost to amount to impiety. The limits of the Holy Ghost are marked out; it is to teach agreeably to the teachings of fallible mortals; it is to guide by their wisdom, and to illumine by their light.

Besides, what do these contending parties think of the Holy Ghost's teaching what they are continually denouncing to each other as wrong? Does it teach Calvinism and Arminianism at the same time? Did it dictate the contradictory Creeds, and the heterogeneous mass of Articles of the Church of England?

(†) This has been invariably the testimony of every Unitarian convert from Trinitarianism. The Scriptures, and the Scriptures *alone*, must be diligently studied; or the hapless individual must groan in spiritual bondage.

(‡) From the slavish spirit of Trinitarianism, there are perhaps thousands in the same deplorable case as the pitiful individual who exclaimed to Whiston, "*I dare not examine, I dare not examine. For if we should examine and find that you are in the right, the church has then been in an error so many hundred years.*" Bp. Smalridge.

Indeed, such is Trinitarian mental imbecility, that many of them dare not even think.

A SKETCH

*Of the State of Christianity in Wales from the time of
Pelagius to that of Wickliff.*

(Continued from p. 12.)

As St. David was nearly related to the chief rulers of the country, being the brother-in-law of Meirig ap Tewdrig, commonly called Uthyr Pendragon, and uncle of the famous Arthur, it must have given him a decided advantage and superiority over his opponents in the religious contest which he had with them.—Nor is it to be doubted that he owed to that, in a great measure, the successful issue of the contest. The old religion, which we call Pelagianism, was finally borne down and suppressed, or rather, its adherents became an obscure, private, and invisible sect, existing chiefly among the bards or druids of Siluria, and its tenets propagated only in their private assemblies, or in some very secret manner.

The new, or Catholic faith, in the mean time, kept rapidly gaining ground, and soon became firmly established, being disseminated, far and wide, by increasing numbers of active and zealous teachers, who had been educated at the numerous seminaries which had been established in different parts of the country. Of them many were Bretons, or natives of Armorica, who, being originally of right orthodox principles, could not fail or materially promoting the Catholic cause in this country. Of the Seminaries or Colleges erected here in those times some of the chief were those of *Henllan* and *Mochros*, places lying somewhere about the banks of the Wye, and under the direction of Dyfrig, or Dubricius, who is said to have had there for sometime no less than a thousand scholars. There were many other Seminaries in different parts of Wales.

From these Seminaries such of the students as were natives of Llydaw, or Armorica, at least many of them, returned again into their own country, where some of them became very eminent, and obtained high ecclesiastical honors and preferments. Of the other students great numbers went out and spread themselves over the different parts of the country, many of whom, probably, settled at those places which still bear their names, where churches were built, which would naturally be dedicated to those who first labored or settled there. Hence, probably, the origin of parish churches in Wales, and of the names which many of them still bear. The unwearied activity and exertions of so many zealous preachers could not fail of producing a very considerable effect throughout the country, and contributing materially to give stability to the religion then propagated.

This religion such as it was, appears to have spread and flourished afterward for a good while ; and it must be allowed, that though it was the religion of Rome and of the Pope, it was far from being then so corrupt as the popery of later times. It was not, however, even then so pure as many modern writers are pleased to suppose and represent it. Some Anti-Pœdobaptists, more zealous than knowing, have been unwilling to allow that either infant baptism or diocesan episcopacy was among its tenets ; not considering that there is every reason to suppose that the religion of St. Germain and his associates was the same with that of the Pope and of St Austin, which undoubtedly comprehend those tenets. After the arrival of St. Germain there certainly were bishoprics founded in Wales, such as those of Caerleon upon Usk, Landaff, St. David's, Llandabarn fawr, Bangor and St. Asaph ; and it seems more than probable that infant baptism also did then obtain in that country ; but how the case stood before that period, is another question.—Then, indeed, it may be said to be highly improbable that either the one or the other had ever found its way into Britain, as no traces of them are discoverable among the more early British christians. It is natural therefore to conclude that they were not among their religious institutes. The coming of St. Germain and his Catholic countrymen may also be considered as the Era of the introduction of monasteries and monkery, with divers other innovations among our ancestors.

After the arrival, or invasion of the Saxons, religion continued still in some measure to flourish in Wales, as those people were not able for a long while to extend their cruel ravages to that country. Of those who fled thither out of England from the destructive fury of those invaders, not a few took up the profession of religion, and were admitted into the numerous religious houses established throughout the country, among whom was the memorable Gildas and several of his relations. This helped to keep up and strengthen for a while the cause of religion. It appears, however, from the writings of Gildas, still extant, that, after the death of Arthur, the princes of the country ceased to be the patrons of religion, and became themselves exceedingly depraved and profligate ; whose example was unhappily followed by the generality of the religious functionaries ; of which the consequence was, that religion soon declined, and was reduced to a very low ebb. The form of it, however, in some measure still remained, and it is probable that it afterward somewhat revived, for we find it, at the arrival of Austin the monk, to be really in some degree of vigor, and seemingly much less corrupt than the religion which that monk then introduced from Rome. The case, probably, was, that the Britons had not kept pace with the Romans in corrupting their religion, and it might remain still much the same as when they had received it from St. Germain, which is not at all unlikely,

considering the little intercourse they appear to have had with Rome in the interim.

One main circumstance, about which the Britons now differed from the Romans, was the time of keeping Easter, or the Pass-over: both parties were zealous observers of that festival, but, in the time of observing it, the Britons followed the orientals, and the most ancient custom, and so differed from the Roman or western christians, who had of late, it seems, adopted some innovations, by which they chose to be directed in settling the time, and particularly Dionysius's Cycle of nineteen years. Some also have supposed that the opinion to which the Britons now adhered was not of very long standing among them, as it is said there existed no such difference between them and their neighbours in the time of Constantine. But that is no proof of its not being of long standing here, as it may be accounted for by the circumstance just now noticed of innovations having been lately adopted by the rest of the western christians; so that the opinion, or custom of the Britons, in this particular, might be the same as it was in the time of the said Emperor. However that was, the Britons were now firmly attached to their own way of thinking on this subject, for which they were abundantly reviled and execrated, and the *Quartodecimani* were long classed among the worst of heretics.

Another point of difference between the Britons and the Romans regarded something in the administration of baptism; what that was does not appear very clear; but it most probably related to some novel or additional ceremonies which the Romanists had lately adopted and attached to the administration of that ordinance. Be that as it might, the Britons were so attached to their own notions, that they would on no account relinquish them, or accede to the proposals of Austin, who, at two different interviews he had with their principal ecclesiastics, would fain persuade them to receive what may be called, the new edition of christianity, with large additions, which he had now brought with him from Rome. An acknowledgment of the Pope's supremacy was another of Austin's requisitions, with which the Britons refused to comply. In consequence of their refusal he is said to have excited the Saxons to make war upon them by way of revenge. A Saxon army drew towards Bangor, which seems to have been a particular object of their vengeance. One of the Welsh princes hastily drew together some forces to oppose them: a battle ensued, near Chester, where the Britons were defeated; the college or monastery of Bangor was afterwards destroyed, great numbers of the students or residents were slaughtered, and the rest dispersed. By degrees, after the conversion of the Saxons had been effected, and a regular intercourse established between England and Italy, the Welsh christians no longer held out, but fully submitted themselves to the papal power. Thence-

forth they celebrated Easter and administered baptism according to the Roman form, and became every way as good Catholics as any of their neighbours. Indeed the religion of Wales appears to have been for some time approximating towards that of Austin and his master Gregory; for at the above interviews or conferences the difference seemed chiefly to consist in certain empty and useless observances; no substantial obstacle or difficulty is known to have been urged there, save only that of absolute submission to the authority of the pope, or an acknowledgement of his supremacy; and even that appears soon to have been pretty easily surmounted. From that time to that of Wicliff, the religious history of Wales is no other than the history of the same kind of popery that then prevailed in the parts of what is usually called Christendom; and so need not be here further enlarged upon.

On the Ceremony of Confirmation, as practised by the Sect called the Established Church of England.

(Continued from p. 84.)

It is pretended that the practice of the Apostles and the Church from the early ages, is sufficient authority for the use of the Ceremony of Confirmation, still we are left in the dark as to its origin. We are not informed whether it is traceable to the simple but universal method of introducing the first Christians into communion with the Church, or is a remnant of some ancient initiation into the secret mysteries of Paganism. (*) But if ignorant as to whence the rite sprung, we are favored with high authority for its due observance; viz, "the example of the Apostles, and the practice of the primitive church". (†) A disciple of Christ, would have attached more importance to a command or injunction from his Lord and Master; the authority would have

(*) This supposition is probable. "Its true origin is doubtful; but it seems to be a continuation of the Pagan practice, of celebrating the initiation of young persons into the mysteries. A practice so prevalent, first in Egypt and then in Greece that it is highly probable the philosophers who contrived to introduce so many of their former opinions and practices into the church, would introduce that also, and by a similar ceremony make a show of initiating their catechumens into the church. There is the greater probability of such being its origin, since in those early days, when the church was filling fast by converts from Idolatry, the main body of the baptized were not children but adults, who, flocking over to the faith of Christ were let in at this door. Accordingly the language of Origen about the year 240 is this. "We initiate them in our mysteries, when they have made a proficiency in holiness, and according to the utmost of their power, have reformed their conversation." *Worsley's Lectures on Non-conformity.* p p. 149. 150.

(†) This is not correct "the Church of England has thought proper of itself and by its own authority, to institute another rite, which is that of Confirmation." *Worsley's Lectures:* p. 147.

possessed far more weight and influence, had it been one of his institutions. But "the example of the Apostles" is cited, yet the name of the place, where they used Church of England confirmation is unfortunately omitted, nor are we informed whether it was recommended to any particular church, or generally to the whole body of professing Christians. It is indeed recorded—(Acts xiv. 22 and xv. 41.) that Paul with Barnabas, and afterwards with Silas, did confirm individuals, or whole Churches of disciples, during their missionary tours. But does it follow that the confirming by the Apostles, is the same with that of the English Bishops, because the same term is used by both? Certainly not. Even if the Apostolic practice consisted of any thing more than confirming the first disciples in the purity of their faith by preaching and exhortation, yet the mere application of the same name proves nothing; it is necessary to shew, that the ceremony is in both instances the same, and productive of the same results.

And in the absence of the Apostolical command, some doubts may arise as to the solidity of this authority even as an example. It is not generally known, that the Apostles had any Godfathers and Godmothers to promise and vow for *them*; they themselves have not given us that information, nor that they deemed their salvation certain, because happily confirmed by some holy bishop. When they baptized, they did not require Sponsors to promise the performance of impossibilities, nor did they ever assure those whom they baptized, or on whom they laid on hands that on that account, their sins were forgiven, that they were made children of God, and were gracious and well pleasing in his sight.

But if it be allowed, as the advocates of the modern rite assert, that the apostles and primitive church had a ceremony of confirmation, it is necessary, as has been before stated, to prove that it is essentially the same, and synonymous with that of the church of England. The apostles were to lay on hands; the modern bishops do the same, but this appropriation or adoption of a particular action, does not at all identify the one with the other. They may be distinct. They may be diametrically opposite.

The celebrated passage (Acts viii. 14—17 also xix. 5, 6.) so triumphantly referred to in proof, fails most lamentably. It records that Peter and John being sent by the apostles from Jerusalem to the Samaritan believers, prayed, and laid their hands on them, (being previously baptized *in the name of the Lord Jesus*;) and they received the Holy Ghost. This is very far from supporting modern confirmation, for the English church does not baptize "in the name of the Lord Jesus," but "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Ghost;" (*) and further, that to be "baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, are *essential* parts of baptism." (†) Now the Evangelist, in the passages just alluded to, evidently refers to those miraculous powers, which the apostles conferred, (or were the medium through which those powers were transmitted) by the laying on of hands; which powers were peculiar to the church during the apostolic age, and ceased with it. The English bishop cannot confer these powers and therefore *his* laying on of hands whatever may be its signification, cannot be identified with the apostolic practice. (†)

Nor should it be forgotten that the apostles preached repentance as the preliminary to Baptism; "repent and be baptized;" but what the church of England means when she teaches her Catechumens that previous to baptism, repentance is required whereby sin is forsaken, and faith whereby the promises of God made in the sacrament are steadfastly believed, is not very obvious. Did adults only approach her baptismal font there might be some foundation for these dogmas, but what kind of repentance can be achieved—what kind of sins are they, and how are they to be forsaken by an infant of a month old. What kind of faith can an unconscious being have, in promises, which it cannot become acquainted with until a future period. The English Church baptizes infants who know nothing of sin either in thought, word or deed, and are therefore incapable of repentance. It is impossible to repent, when there is nothing to repent of. Nor can they possess faith. They cannot possess a faith founded upon evidence, it being impossible for them duly to weigh and appreciate it, nor can they possess that blind indiscriminating faculty which lays claim to the same title, and gulphs down with the greatest readiness, wholesale absurdities, mysteries, and impossibilities. Of these things infants take not any cognizance.

Further; the apostles inculcated the necessity of good works meet for repentance as essential to salvation, but here the order

(*) Baptismal service.

(†) Private baptism.

(†) A small work, apparently on high authority, bearing the imprimatur of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge," to which it is in fact dedicated, and being I understand extensively used in Episcopalian Sunday, and other schools, the copy before me, being the 42nd edition published in 1815, is entitled "The Church Catechism explained &c." by the Rev. John Lewis, and from it I extract the following exquisite morceau. Q. Does the Bishop then *give* the Holy-Ghost ~~which~~ the Apostles did then, by their laying on of hands? A. We do not say that the Apostles *gave* the Holy Ghost; they laid on their hands, and God gave the Holy Spirit, to those on whom they laid *them*. And so we hope that by the fervent prayers of the Bishop and the church, they on whom he now lays his hands, shall also receive the Holy Ghost if they do but worthily prepare themselves for it." With what dainty scraps of theological erudition, are the young bantlings of the Holy Church, fed and nourished! Admirable specimen of orthodox acumen! We do not say, that the Apostles *gave* the Holy Ghost! Gave! No truly. How could they give the Trinitarian's God, the Holy Ghost, the third person of the holy blessed and glorious trinity? How preposterous!

of Confirmation to preserve its consistency is wisely silent: nay the English Bishop without troubling himself about any such old and antiquated custom, certifies to those upon whom he has laid his hands, after the example of the apostles, of God's favor and gracious goodness towards them, having previously imparted to them the comfortable information, that all their sins were forgiven. This certainly is not in unison with apostolical example.

Lastly, the ceremony we are treating of, cannot possibly have been adopted from apostolic practice. According to the church as by law established in this realm of England, it is necessary previous to confirmation, to be able to repeat the apostles' creed, the Lord's prayer, and the answers to the catechism.

There does not appear to be any historical testimony, proving that the apostles' creed was known before the 4th century, consequently long after the worthies whose name it bears, had all finished their earthly pilgrimage. The catechism is of comparatively modern date, first appearing (being about half its present length,) in the reign of Edward VI, when the first English liturgy was compiled; not two hundred and eighty years ago. The apostles' could not require from those they confirmed, an affirmation of belief in creeds and catechisms not then in existence, and therefore the rite of confirmation as it now stands is not that which the apostles' practised, if they had any ceremony of confirmation at all.

The apostles therefore furnish no authority, either from precept or example, upon which the church of England can found the legitimacy of her ceremony, and in the absence of any attempt to produce that of Jesus Christ, it is unnecessary to investigate the still weaker authority arising from the practice of the primitive church. (*)

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

The following Extracts are from an excellent Sermon, on the Proem to John's Gospel, by Mr. Gilman, minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Charleston, S. C.

"THE strongest argument then, [in favor of the orthodox interpretation of this passage] is this. Look, say the advocates of this doctrine, at the plain language of the first verse in John. What can be more explicit, than the naked statement itself in the very terms of scripture? *The word was God.* How, they

(*) Mr. Worsley indeed decisively asserts that "this rite of confirmation is not an apostolic institution, nor was it known in the church, until the third century, when it is first spoken of by Tertullian" Lectures, p. 149.

ask, can any, who pretend to receive the bible, after this deny the possession both of Deity and personality to what John calls *the Word*?

"You see that I have stated the argument in its very strongest light, and, I do not wonder that its advocates confidently bring it forward, and charge us home with its whole force. But, after allowing and stating all this, I think I may humbly claim to be heard with equal attention and equal deference on the other side.

"I hold it then to be a right rule of Scripture criticism, when a text occurs, which in its literal sense contradicts our understanding, to search and examine as diligently as we possibly can, for some meaning which may satisfy our reason, and still be consistent with the rest of the Bible. If two meanings are assigned to any scriptural passage, one mysterious, and another clear, I wish to know by what law of God or man, I am required to adopt the mysterious in preference to the clear. The Roman Catholic asks us what can be more plain and explicit than the assertion of Jesus, *This bread is my body*. Now, if I am to take every expression in its first and literal sense, I know not how I can escape admitting that the bread which Jesus brake, was literally and truly his own body. But on a moment's reflection, I perceive that that could not be the meaning of Scripture. Why not? Because; as my respected opponents, who are Protestants, will themselves say, it violates the plainest dictates of the understanding. Exactly so! Here then they have stepped over on my own ground. When we look at the sentence, the Word was with God, and the Word was God, who is not ready to pronounce that this is an absolute contradiction, or at least, a plain solecism in terms? We *never* say in common life, unless indeed we happen to be speaking figuratively, and we *never*, in other parts of Scripture, find it said, that one thing is *with* another, and yet that the first thing is the *same* as the second. The very term *with* in the mind of every one who uses it intrinsically implies an idea of distinction, separation, and want of identity.

"Here then we are one moment at a stand.—Which way shall we proceed? How interpret the sentence before us? "Take it," says the conscientious Trinitarian, "just as it stands with all its mysteries, all its difficulty, all its opposition to the common uses of language and of reason, and inquire no farther." "Not so," says the thoughtless infidel. "Reject the whole thing at once. *Laugh* at such a heterogeneous mass of incomprehensible nonsense, and close the bible for ever, which presents language to view that shocks and staggers the mind." Suppose we decline to take either of these diametrically opposite extremes.

"Had John intended to begin his Gospel by informing his readers that Jesus Christ was truly God, he would probably have

told us so in plain and clear terms, and not involved his meaning in a cloud of figurative obscurity.

“I would observe, that the great object of this treatise of St John is evidently to give an account of the religion of Jesus. When he commences it therefore, what so natural as to remind us immediately of its heavenly origin, and to describe the state of the world before the gospel dispensation, and the need there was of a new revelation from heaven? Accordingly, the first five verses appear to me to be devoted to this purpose. In the beginning he tells us, *was the Word*; that is as I understand it along with most of the interpreters just now enumerated, in the beginning of all things, a vast creating *power and wisdom* were put into exercise. The *word* is evidently the *command* by which God creates all things. Moses represents God as only *saying*, let there be light, and there *was* light. And the Psalmist tells us, the heavens were made by the *word* of God, which manifestly signifies nothing more than the command, will or power of God, brought the heavens into being. Surely no separate power or agent needs be here supposed; and John goes on to tell us, that the word was *with* God, he means, as I understand him, to assert that the power and wisdom exerted in creation were not spontaneous, did not act by chance, but were *with* God, or with a great first cause, i. e. he means to overthrow and sweep away by this little sentence, the whole fabric of Atheism. What then does he mean by saying immediately, that the *Word was God*? Clearly, he intends to guard his reader against supposing that this word, this property, this acting energy of God, was a separate agent from God himself. Because, it is not possible, in the nature of things, that power, wisdom, command, or word, should exist of themselves, or separately from the being who puts them forth. He therefore assures us that he means by the Word nothing more than the one Jehovah himself, acting by his power and wisdom. Thus then in this far-famed, this much boasted little sentence, which has been so often and so triumphantly brought forward as an irrefragable proof of the doctrine of the trinity, I conscientiously see nothing but an absolute assertion of the strict and indivisible Unity of God.

“In order to shew you that I have not strained this point of language in the least, I will illustrate my view of this first verse, by a similar sentence on a far humbler theme, but of which I trust every one will perceive the force and propriety of the resemblance. Suppose, then, I should say, in the beginning of the American Revolution, that there was a hope for our country, and that hope was *with* Washington, and that hope *was* Washington. Would it not savour something of a mere word-catching spirit, to pretend to understand two persons as united here in the one man Washington, or that could make the *hope* of our

country a distinct and different agent from Washinton? Or, suppose a powerful monarch should command a splendid palace to be erected.—Usage would justify one in saying figuratively, it was a *word* that made this beautiful fabric,” though to guard against misconception, he would immediately perhaps say, “By the *word*, I mean only the monarch himself.” I see no defect in the argument which applies these two illustrations to the first verse in John.”

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS AT WIGAN.

No. II.

“I ask them not to credit, but refute.”

THESE discussions at Park Lane had gone on for several Lord's day evenings, before I was urged by some of the Wigan Unitarians to attend them. The subject under consideration was the popular Doctrine of Atonement. How the proposition was laid down I cannot tell, and how it was argued I do not know, as I was not present; but if I may judge from what I have heard frequently from the advocates of this unscriptural doctrine, it must have been managed by them in their usual way, viz. by forstalling the inspired writers, by seizing their general notion of the death of Christ, and supposing several very absurd things about it, which the sacred penmen never thought of, by working a monstrous error out of a scripture truth, by supposing that God whose offspring we all are, was irascible and out of temper with mankind; that he was wrathful, revengeful, and unforgiving; that he actually would have inevitably and eternally destroyed them all, but that Jesus Christ interposed, and by voluntarily offering to shed his own blood brought him into good humour again; or by supposing that God was a cruel being who delighted in human sacrifices; or that Jesus died to save his disciples the trouble of being holy.

This unscriptural doctrine according to the view of it taken by the self named orthodox, in my opinion, envelopes the peerless majesty of Jehovah in darkness and impenetrable gloom, it presents to the mind a being whom we cannot love, if we would; and whom we ought not to love if we could. This doctrine which appears to me as a foul libel on the God of the Scriptures, must I think have originated in the mind of some ill-tempered theologian, who thought that God was such an one as himself, and that Jesus Christ suffered in consequence of a

barbarousness in God, something like what he felt himself, when his temper was roused and he became fierce and savage. I call this doctrine unscriptural, according to the popular view of it, because that view of it is, that the atonement was made to God ; now if the atonement was made to God of course God must have received it, but did he ? because if God received it, was not Paul mistaken, when in Rom. v. 10, 11 he says. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son ; much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom *we* have now received the atonement : so that whatever the atonement might be or mean, it is we who have received it not God. Now the popular notion is that the atonement was made to God that it was a price paid to his justice to answer its demands, and to appease his anger, and incline him to lay it by. It has been said by the advocates of this doctrine a thousand times, and will, I suppose, a thousand times ten thousand more, for they are seldom weary of repetition though it be vain, that God received the price and we the benefit : but the apostle does not say so, the scriptures do not say so. If it be true it seems a pity that he had not said so, had it been so understood by him, I suppose he would have said so, had it been of so great importance to us as the self-named orthodox say it is, he ought to have said so, had he understood it as they do, no doubt he would have said so : for surely he could have said so as plainly as they can, but he has not done so ; and knowing that he has not they come in to help him out, by telling us what the apostle means, or meant to have said. This perhaps by them is kindly intended but there is this mischief connected with their officiousness, when he speaks for himself we generally understand him, but when they speak for him we never can understand

The very first evening I attended the meetings, I found that one of the speakers had reduced the work of redemption to a commercial concern, to a mere contract, (job or bargain,) literally having taken place among some parties, which he denominated the persons of the ever blessed and glorious trinity, a long time back, before the word was made, in the councils of eternity. And finding that he was determined to drive on this bargain and to clench it by ringing perpetual changes on such terms as bought, purchased and redeemed in their literal acceptation ; it was stated to him and his compeers, that in their literal acceptations there are four ideas inseparable from the terms bought and purchased, viz. the article bought, the price paid down the person who sells it and the person who buys it. They were frequently urged to make out these four things to us, for without these the bargain, the contract, is incomplete. They were also urged to do this from the press by one who signs himself

A BEREAN who proposed to them thirty-four questions on the Doctrine of Atonement, headed with these four which made thirty-eight.

By a Berean these four questions were proposed in the following way. "According to the Doctrine of Atonement, the salvation of man was bought, bargained, or contracted for.

In circumstances of this nature, four points are essential. First, What is the thing bought? Second, what was the price paid? Third, to what class of beings did he belong, who made the purchase? Fourth, of whom was the purchase made? The *Mercurius* of the party, thinking as I suppose, that a poor attempt would be better than none, did once attempt it and stuck fast in the middle, his reply to the first question was, "The souls of men" and to the Second, the blood of Christ; but to the third and fourth he made no reply. They died and made no sign. (Quere, will they ever make any?)

I now call on them again to furnish us and the world with direct and unambiguous answers to these four questions. I insist upon it that the Doctrine of Atonement according to their view of it demands that they should be answered; for if they are not the contract, the bargain, the purchase they so much talk of is incomplete; if incomplete in consequence of their not being able to produce the things and persons essentially necessary to the formation and completion of a contract or bargain, then the popular notion of Atonement falls to the ground, and indeed every other literal notion of it, unless the leader above referred to, and his coadjutors should happen to strike out some new plan or give us some modified statement of the doctrine more scriptural and less Calvinistical.

I wonder what they will do with these questions? Will they continue to treat them with cold indifference and long neglect as WARDLAW seems to be treating YATES's Sequel," and as the great Goliath of the Atonement, though not in its orthodox form, MAGEE seems to treat Dr. Carpenter's Reply?" or like some pusillanimous swaggerer, whose words are bigger than his blows are hard, who turning from his antagonist assures him what he would do to him were it not for sullyng his fingers, while he has a much better reason for letting him alone? I much wish that the advocates of the Atonement would take it into their heads to give a formal reply to FOX's letters to DR. PYE SMITH in reply to a sermon of his on the sacrifice of Christ; or to WRIGHT's Anti-satisfactionist," republished in an improved form in 1811, under the title of the "Free Grace of God," and also his tract on the Atonement. That would be doing something and doing it without the assistance of hissing and other orthodox gesticulations.

J. R.

Hindley, February 13th, 1826.

SINGULAR ERRATUM IN A STEREOTYPED EDITION OF THE BIBLE.

SIR,

I have often heard persons express their astonishment at the errors to be found in printed copies of books, and the bible is supposed to be entirely free from errors of this description. I have found many errors of the press in the copies of the scriptures which have issued from the privileged presses of Oxford and Cambridge; but I know of no one more curious, and more likely to mislead the uninformed reader than the following; and which by some weak minds might be brought forward as a proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, with as much propriety as the celebrated passage of the three witnesses in 1 John v. 7, and other equally spurious passages have been adduced by the pretendedly learned.

Now, Sir, if the correctors of the Royal Press, were so far fallible as to let such an error as the following escape them, we need not be surprised that those who transcribed the sacred writings should have made so many mistakes in the text of the scriptures; the wonder is, with respect to the Old Testament in particular, when the similarity of the letters which compose the Hebrew language is considered, that there should have been so few.

In the following, I have copied the title &c. verbatim lest any one should be disposed to question its correctness. I shall not at present enlarge further; should it be recorded in the pages of the Reflector, I may at some future period, be induced to offer you a few remarks on the same, and am yours respectfully,

PHILOLOGOS.

“THE Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments. translated out of the original tongues: and with the former translations diligently compared and revised, by his Majesty’s special command.

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And sold, to Subscribers only, at the Depository, Earl Street, Blackfriars, London, 1821.”

1 Corinthians, viii. 6. But to us *three* is but one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom *are* all things, and we by him.

THE GLEANER.

 "WE CULL THE CHOICEST"

CHARLES II.

It has been asserted by some and denied by others, that Charles the Second was a Papist. It is a matter of very little moment, so far as opinion is concerned, what religion he professed, who in his manners and conduct showed the greatest disregard, not only for religion, but for morality and decency—The following document is curious, and may be read with some degree of attention, if not with much interest by our friends. It is copied from a work called the "Phenix," published 1707, and is said to have been found in the Monarch's strong box after his decease, and attested by his brother's (James) signature.

THE Discourse we had the other day, I hope, satisfied you in the main, *That Christ can have but one Church here upon Earth?* and I believe that it is as visible, as that the Scripture is in Print. That none can be that Church, but that which is call'd the *The Roman Catholick Church*. I think you need not trouble your self with entering into that Ocean of particular Disputes, when the main, and in truth the only Question is, where that church is, which we profess to believe in the two Creeds? We declare there to believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church and it is not left to every fantastical man's Head to believe as he pleases; but to the Church, to whom Christ left the Power upon Earth to govern us in matters of Faith, who made these Creeds for our Directions. It were a very irrational thing to make Laws for a Country, and leave it to the Inhabitants to be the Interpreters and Judges of those Laws: for then every man will be his own Judg, and by consequence no such things as either Right or Wrong. Can we therefore suppose that God Almighty would leave us at those Uncertainties, as to give us a Rule to go by, and leave every Man to be his own Judg? I do ask any ingenious man, whether it be not the same thing to follow our own Fancy, or to interpret the Scripture by it? I would have any Man shew me, where the Power of deciding Matters of Faith is given to every particular Man. Christ left his Power to his Church, *even to forgive Sins in Heaven*, and left his Spirit with them, which they exercis'd after his Resurrection: First by his Apostles in their Creeds, and many years after by the Council at *Nice*, where that Creed was made that is call'd by that name: and by the Power which they had receiv'd from Christ, they were the Judges even of the Scripture itself, many years after the Apostles, which Books were Canonical and which were not. And if they

had this power then. I desire to know how they came to lose it, and by what Authority men separate themselves from that Church? The only Pretence I ever heard of, was, because the Church has fail'd in wresting and interpreting the Scripture, contrary to the true Seuse and meaning of it, and that they have impos'd Articles of Faith upon us, which are not to be warrant-ed by God's Word. I do desire to know who is to be Judg of that, whether the whole Church, the Succession whereof has continued to this day without interruption, or particular Men, who have rais'd Schisms for their own advantage.

This is a true Copy of a Paper I found in the Late King my Brother's Strong Box, written in his own hand.

J. REX.

The Sexton with a tender Conscience.

Jenkin was the sexton of the Church of Berwick. A stranger who was passing through the town, wished as is common with travellers to see the Church. It was accordingly shown to him by the sexton; to whom he intended to give a shilling for his trouble, but by accident, he had not any silver smaller than a half crown; he put it into his hand; and desired that he would return to him eighteen pence. "God forbid sir! replied the pious and primitive Jenkin, (putting the half crown into his pocket") Don't you remember that our Saviour whipped the money changers out of the temple.

Memoirs of Percival Stockdale.

INTELLIGENCE.

THE Rev. W. J. Bakewell of Chester, has accepted the invitation to become the Pastor of the Unitarian Congregation at Edinburgh, to which place he removes in May next.

THE Rev Mr. Elliott, of Rochdale, has accepted the invitation to succeed the Rev. W. T. Procter, as the Pastor of the Unitarian Congregation at Prescott.

Somerset, Gloucester, and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association.

THE next half yearly general meeting of this Association, will be held at Frenchay, near Bristol, on Friday, March 24th, (the day commonly called Good Friday) when the Rev. Matthew Harding is expected to preach; the morning service to commence at Eleven o'Clock.

THE Fourth Anniversary of the Unitarian Congregation, meeting in Moor Lane, Bolton, will be held on Sunday, 26th March, when the Rev. J. G. Robberds, of Manchester, and the Rev. W. J. Bakewell, of Chester, will conduct the religious services; and on the Monday the Congregation and Friends will dine together, as usual, in Mr. Watson's Cloth Hall, on which occasion the Rev. W. Sheperd, of Gateacre is invited to take the Chair.

Three Sermons will be preached on the Sunday, and a Sermon on the Monday evening, at half past Six o'clock.

We hope the expectation of this interesting and highly praiseworthy Society will be realized, by the visit and countenance of their brethren in the neighbourhood, and as they have done so much in the great cause of truth, be assisted and supported by all who are able to help them.

POETRY.

DELAMERE FOREST CHAPEL.

Beneath a hill, the top of which commands
A spacious view of cultivated lands,
Where nature's beauties on all sides we trace,
And art itself puts on a pleasing face,
Where jutting stones, of various forms appear,

Proud of the lowly ornaments they wear
Of yellow moss and haubells faintly blue,
That sip the purest of the evening dew,
Where rude built cots cemented well with clay,

In rustic taste, their white-wash'd fronts display,

A chapel stands, from molestation free,
Devoted to One God, but not to three,
There little children learn, thrice happy throng!

To lip the praise and join the tuneful song
Just by the spot*, the harvest way'd its head
In gay luxuriance, now the silent dead
May, disregarded by their earthly foes,
Wait the last trump in undisturbed repose,
No costly stones shall mark their former state

Nor grace the mound which simply tells
their fate.

Each Sunday morn the hardy sons of toil,
Whose week-day task is to improve the soil,
With heart elate, yet innocently gay,
Together meet, and adoration pay
To the one great Supreme, their father,
friend,

Whose boundless mercies ne'er shall have
an end.

The time shall come when bigotry shall
view

With a less jaundic'd eye the zealous few,†
Who worship God in ways they most approve,

And build their creed upon the law of love;
'Tis the true source whence virtuous friendship springs,

The pleasing foretaste of more heav'nly things.

Who would have thought a century ago,
The forest's pride could soon be laid so low;

For stately oaks and tow'ring pines, no more
Afford a shelter to the lab'ring poor:

The lowly brushwood now usurps their place
And whiten'd hamlets fill each vacant space,
There plenty reigns without the aid of wealth,

And labour's sweeten'd by the best of health.

No superstitious tales offend the ear,
Of midnight orgies, or the funeral bier
That slowly moves through unfrequented ways,

Directed only by the torches' blaze,
For reason dawns upon the human mind,
And rustic manners are the more refin'd
When pure religion marks the happy way,
That leads to bliss and everlasting day.

M.

Delamere.

* The burial ground.

† The congregation.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The communication from Nantwich came to hand too late for insertion in the present number,

Printed by F. B. Wright, Swift's Court, Castle Street;

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

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APRIL 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(From the Theological Repository, Vol. I. A. D. 1769.)

JOHN I. 15.

MANY learned men have been aware of disorders by means of transpositions in several texts of the New Testament, and have endeavored to rectify them by conjectural emendations, of which Mr. Bowyer has given us a large collection in his late edition of the Greek Testament.

The late Dr. Doddridge was aware, that this verse breaks the connexion which is manifest between the 14th and the 16th verses, and proposed to place it in a parenthesis, which Mr. Bowyer has done in his edition of the Greek Testament. But I apprehend this is not sufficient to restore the text to its proper state: for, besides that such a parenthesis interrupts the connexion of sentiment contained in the 14th and 16th verses in a very unaccountable manner, this 15th verse hath an evident connexion with the 19th verse, as Piscator observes; and, before it, I apprehend, it ought to stand, in which case the whole passage will read thus:

14 *And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father) full of grace and truth.*

16 *And of his fulness have all we received, and (even) grace for grace.*

17 *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*

18 *No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.*

15 *John bare witness of him, and cried, saying ; this is he of whom I spake : he that cometh after me, is preferred before me, for he was before me.*

19 *And this is the record of John when the Jews sent priests and levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou ?*

Whether this position of the parts doth not render the whole passage more methodical, clear and easy ; consequently, whether it is not probable, that this is the original and true reading is submitted to the judgment of others.

But I cannot quit this passage without hinting an observation or two.

1st. The evangelist himself appears purposely to explain what he meant by grace for grace, v. 16. in the words immediately following v. 17. “ For the law was given by Moses : grace and truth was by Jesus Christ.” Undoubtedly, the law was a great grace, favour, or benefit to the Jews ; and, indeed, through them, to the rest of mankind : Moses enlarges much, in shewing it to be such, in the book of Deuteronomy : but Christ delivered to us the gospel in its room, which is an infinitely superior benefit, worthy to be denominated in an emphatical sense, grace and truth ; compared with which, the grace of the law was but a shadow and a yoke of bondage. *Anti* (*Anti*) is used in this sense (for instead, or in place) Matt. ii. 22. Luke xi. 11. 1Cor. xi. 15.

It seems strange, that when Beza had once suggested this interpretation, every body was not satisfied with it.

2 I would observe, that the words, “ which is in the bosom of the father,” verse 18, are the words of the evangelist, written by him many years after Christ’s ascension, and are evidently designed to express his then state of glorification, subsequent to his ascension : consequently they cannot reasonably be considered as parallel to those words attributed to Christ himself, when conversing with Nicodemus, on earth, ch. iii. 13. “ Even the son of man, who is in heaven.”

As to the last cited text ; it seems very strange that Jesus should affirm to the Jewish Rabbi concerning himself, at the instant he was conversing with him face to face, that “ he was

in heaven." One cannot suppose that he meant to puzzle the man, who came to him with a serious desire to obtain information, with ænigmatical expressions, which it was impossible he should unravel. If we should take *ων* (*on*) as a participle of the imperfect tense, and render it *was*, still the clause, who was in heaven, seems superfluous; for in saying that he came down from heaven, he had, in effect said that he was in heaven.

Dr. Mill informs us, that this clause is not found in one of the Colbertine MS. is omitted by Gregory Nazianzene and Epiphanius, he supposes, because they found it hard to be understood; and no wonder; and that it is also wanting in the Ethiopic version; a version which bishop Walton deems to be very ancient, and to have been made from ancient Greek copies in the times next after the apostles, because it agrees with the old Greek codes in many places where the Greek books at present read otherwise. Vide Watson's Proleg. p. 100.

I suspect, therefore, that this odd looking clause doth not belong to the text, but that it crept into it out of the margin of some very ancient copies, possibly even of the architype itself, where it might be put down by some person by way of note, to explain who and where the son of man, spoken of in the text, is; and probably he might be led to put it in this form by a recollection of John's words in ch. i. v. 18. who is in the bosom of the father.

3. The testimony which John bare to Christ, v. 15. hath occasioned some embarrassment to commentators; nor hath our version removed the obscurity; He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me. May I be indulged in offering the following hints towards illustrating it.

Ἐμπροσθεν (*Emprosthen*,) I apprehend, is often used to denote a person or thing being before, or in the presence of others, as an object of notice, or attention, thus, Matt. v. 16. Let your light so shine before men.—vi. 1. Take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them.—x. 32, 33. before men—before my father. John xii. 37. Though he had done so many miracles before them—and other places. It is also used in relation to the counsels and determinations of the divine mind, Matt. xi. 26. Even so, father, for so it seemed good in thy

sight. *Εμπροσθεν σου* (*Emprosthen sou*,) Even so, it is not the will of your father. See also Luke x. 21. It is also used concerning objects of expectation to the human mind. Phil. iii. 13. "Reaching forth unto those things which are before."

Πρωτος, (*Protos*,) also is used to signify a chief or superior. Matt. xx. 27. "Whosoever will be chief among you." Mark vi. 21. "Chief estates of Gallilee. See also Mark x. 44.—xii. 28, 29, 30. Luke xix. 47. Acts xiii. 50, and other places.

I apprehend, therefore, that the Baptist's testimony in this verse, and which is repeated in the 30, verse may be thus translated and explained. "He that cometh after me hath been before me. i. e. present to my mind, as the object of my continual expectation and reverence, "for he was my superior. Or, as he says, v. 23. "Whose shoes latchet I am unworthy to unloose." Compare Matt. iii. 11. &c. Luke iii. 16, 17.

If this be thought to be a just rendering of John's words, it will also be allowed to place them in a very easy and intelligible light.

VIGILIUS.

STRICTURES ON DR. WARDLAW'S REMARKS ON THE INFLUENCE OF UNITARIANISM, IN REFERENCE TO SUPPOSED UNITARIAN CONFORMISTS TO TRINITARIANISM.

(Concluded from page, 56.)

To the Editor.

SIR,

RESUMING the subject of my two preceding letters, I would next observe, that another cause of the conformity of the persons in question, is the doctrine of the inability of man to do any thing of himself; that he is so corrupt and lost by nature, that he is wholly dead to religion; and that unless he is operated upon by a supernatural power, he is as helpless in a spiritual sense, as the lifeless body is in a natural sense.—Hence they are plunged into a state of mental religious imbecility: every ef-

fort is discouraged—every faculty is paralysed: and they remain like clods, where accident has thrown them; or like machines, waiting to be set in motion by foreign aid; (*) insensible to the words of that divine Teacher, who has said, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.”

Another cause is, they have been accustomed to hear good works reprobated and condemned; that “not the least confidence was to be placed in reformation, repentance, or even the most spiritual frames;” that Christ had made a full satisfaction to God for all their sins, past, present, and to come; that “he obeyed the Law, that his obedience might be placed to their account, and accepted by their offended God instead of their own; that his obedience being thus imputed to them, they were accounted righteous before God, and were considered as perfect and complete, as though they had obeyed the Law in their own persons.” (†)

(*) That I have not overstated the tendency of the above stupifying doctrine—the laudandum of orthodoxy, will appear from the following fact. “At a late attempt among the Calvinists of Boston, New England, to get up an awakening, some of their most intelligent preachers and writers, came out quite boldly with the sentiment that there are certain doctrines which must not be preached during revivals of religion; such as our inability to do any thing of ourselves, election, and the like. There was, therefore, a general understanding to waive the preaching of these doctrines during the revival, since it was found that they too much paralysed the wished-for process. Observe, the *truth* and *importance* of the doctrines were not denied. After persons had once come forward and become converted, then the intention was, if possible, to make them embrace the doctrine that they had no moral ability to do any thing of themselves. All this dramatic arrangement, and a great deal more, passed for consistency and fidelity with some tolerably wise men among the orthodox.” *Monthly Repository* for January, 1826, p. 7.

Dr. Wardlaw and his brethren on this side the Atlantic, may learn a little wisdom from their sage brethren in America. If they wish to keep the individuals in question within the pale of their community, they should preach frequently man's inability to do any thing of himself; they should maul them so completely, as to render it utterly impossible for them to run away. Their policy is to reverse the American principle.

(†) The rationality of the above doctrine of imputed righteousness, may be thus illustrated. A master has twenty servants; one is obedient, and the rest are disobedient. The nineteen are accounted obedient, because the twentieth is; and the twentieth is accounted disobedient, because the nineteen are. That is, the disobedience of the nineteen is transferred to the twentieth; and the obedience of the twentieth is transferred to the nineteen.

The tendency of the doctrine, may be illustrated thus. The work of the nineteen is performed by the twentieth, working “*in their place and stead*”; and they have nothing to do but to pass their time in indolence, take their ease, and enjoy their pleasure.

Is it to be expected, that persons who have long been accustomed to hear such doctrines as these preached, should be remarkable for moral sensibility? Is it to be expected, that they should be very nice and scrupulous about the dictates of conscience in religious matters? Is it to be expected that they should look upon religious sincerity as indispensably necessary to acceptance with God? No; not if there be any necessary connection between cause and effect. Acting as they do, they act only agreeably to the system in which they have been brought up; and the system, not the men, is to be held up to condemnation.

Another cause must be looked for in the misrepresentations of the Unitarians and their sentiments by Trinitarian teachers; and in the unfair and unmanly means to which they resort, to deter people from inquiring for themselves. Unitarianism, according to them, is Atheism or Deism; and Unitarians are "God-denying apostates," enemies of christianity in disguise, who are seeking to undermine its foundations, and effect its ruin. The first workings of conviction in favour of Unitarian sentiments, in the breasts of Trinitarians, are described as the temptations of the Devil, which must be ingenuously resisted, and immediately overcome; or the individuals themselves will be eternally damned. Thus, by the tricks of priestcraft, and the terrors of superstition, the mind is stayed in its progress in the investigation of truth. And then, these candid and liberal teachers of religion, plume themselves on their numbers, thus acquired, or thus preserved! A more noble and a more christian course would be, to exhort their people to "judge for themselves what is right," to be "fully persuaded in their own minds," to "prove all things," and to hold "fast that which is good." But find me a Trinitarian teacher who is an ardent friend to free inquiry; who earnestly and frequently exhorts his hearers to search and examine, and judge for themselves; to consider both sides of the question,

Now, if this doctrine is not the height of absurdity and immorality, I know not what is. It is absolutely impossible; while it grants an unlimited licence to commit sin with impunity. And it is truly astonishing, that men who are not mad, and who are not steeped in vice, should be capable of believing it. There can be little doubt, however, that such men are under a most lamentable delusion.

before they decide ; to read Unitarian works as well as Trinitarian, before they draw their conclusion:—find me such a teacher in the Trinitarian denomination, and I will tell you, that you have found a WONDER!

Lastly, the species of persecution practised by Trinitarians towards those who secede from them, and join the Unitarians must be allowed to have great weight, in retaining persons within the Trinitarian pale, in some respects, contrary to their wishes. Who does not know, that, in many instances, such are denounced as apostates? that their names are cast out as evil? that even their friends and relations look upon them as the enemies of Christ, and as aliens; and that their worldly circumstances scarcely ever fail to suffer material injury? It is true, the early christians suffered the loss of every thing, for the sake of Christ and a good conscience. But the case is materially different with respect to the persons here mentioned. It is not with them a choice between christianity and Judaism, or Heathenism, but between different views of Christianity. (*) And as they think the system which they profess, contains some of the principal doctrines of christianity, they may innocently give it their countenance, and secure their worldly prosperity and happiness at the same time. “No system,” they may probably argue, “is altogether pure; and why run any risk, in acting upon too nice scruples? Take the good, and leave the evil and be content.” (†) At all events, the treatment which they must expect, if they secede from Trinitarianism, must have considerable influence in retaining them within its pale, much longer than would otherwise be the case. The world is on its side;—acts of Parliament, civil privileges, emoluments, riches, honours,

(*) As to the simple facts, Unitarians and Trinitarians alike believe in the divine mission of Christ, the Scriptures as the word of God, a general resurrection, and rewards and punishments according to the deeds done in the body. Wherein they differ, see pages 40, and 41.

(†) “Why, then, it often occurred to me, and others did not spare to remonstrate; why must I alone be so singularly nice and scrupulous, as not to comply with what wiser and better men could accommodate themselves to; but disturb others, and distress myself, by enthusiastic fancies, &c.”—

“It was suggested,—that I ought not only to leave my benefice, but to go out of the world, if I expected a perfect state of things, in which there was no flaw or hardship.” Lindsey’s Apology, p. p. 182, 184.

distinctions, secular interests, (*) and whatever is of a worldly nature. And when this, and the above causes, are taken into account, it is no wonder that persons among Trinitarians, partly convinced of the truth of the Unitarian doctrine, should remain for a considerable time, "halting between two opinions," in Trinitarian communion.

And this will solve the problem, why Unitarianism has made no greater progress. Considering all the obstacles which it has had to encounter, it has done wonders. And let but free inquiry be universally encouraged, and it will effect much greater wonders, ere many years shall have elapsed. Trinitarianism stands as despotism stands; by "diffusing darkness round the land;" or by keeping men in ignorance. But let the mighty means to which I have just alluded, be brought into active and general operation, and truth, both religious and political, will have free course, and be glorified in all the earth. And then, the earth will be beautiful, and man will be dignified, and happiness will prevail. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

I have now, Mr. Editor, brought my remarks to a close. Whether I have cleared up the point, I must leave others to judge. In my own opinion, a more palpable piece of sophistry was never attempted to be palmed upon mankind than that which is contained in the passage that has called forth the above strictures. Did Dr. Wardlaw indeed think that the individuals alluded to, were really under the influence of Unitarianism, while they remained in conformity to Trinitarianism? If he did, he

(*) "It is ordained by the connection, we believe by Wesley himself," that professors are to deal, in their worldly dealings, with professors only: the children of "light" are as wise in their generation as the children of the world—somewhat wiser. The physician, who cannot gain a fee among the Children of darkness, turns therefore to the new light; he thrives accordingly, and the party gains a proselyte. A starving taylor becomes an acolyte for the same reason; and thus the connection extends, and the "good cause" thrives. *Westminster Review*, No. viii. October, 1825, page 297.

But the principle is not confined to the Methodists; it is acted upon, more or less, by the whole Trinitarian body; and it is extended, as far as possible, (for there is some independence left) to every species of profession and calling, and to mechanics, servants, and dependents of every description. And, to the utter shame and disgrace of Trinitarians be it spoken, the daily bread of many a poor man depends upon his conformity to the faith of his master or employer. Thus, the Prince of Proselytes for modern Orthodoxy, is—Mammon; backed by intolerance and arbitrary power!

has afforded us another proof of the delusive tendency of the Trinitarian doctrine. And if he did not, what then must we say of the fairness of the writer?

If I have expressed myself, as some may think, too strongly, my justification is, I have been a Trinitarian—I have felt the galling chains of Trinitarian despotism; and it is natural for a man to express himself indignantly, when speaking of the tyranny by which he has been enslaved; and when he reflects at the same time, that numbers are in the same deplorable situation, from which he has fortunately escaped.

That Trinitarians are much better than their system, I readily admit.(*). In the various relations of life, they are generally exemplary. But take them on the subject of religion, and what do they display, but almost every thing that is unamiable in sentiment? Do they not tremble at inquiry? Are they not afraid even to think, lest they should disbelieve? Are they not lost to reason? Are they not sunk in mental imbecility and apathy? Are they not chained down in spiritual bondage? Do they not adopt their opinions from implicit belief? Do they not expect from others an implicit acquiescence in their dictations? Do they not speak and argue as if they were infallible? Are they not dogmatical and overbearing? Are they not in the habit of imputing unworthy motives to those who are opposed to them? Do they not fancy themselves the only favourites of heaven? Do they not vainly imagine that heaven's happiness was designed for them, and them only? Do they not assert that all who think differently from them will perish everlastingly? Do they not, in order to promote their cause, address the most sinister passions. And do they not, in many instances, in regard to servants and dependents, compel conformity to their faith, and thus violate the rights of conscience?

If I do them wrong in putting questions of such an import, I shall feel sorry on my own account, but glad on theirs; and I hence infer, that a period is fast approaching, when they will

(*) If, in the different sects and parties, there are some worse, and others better, than the opinions which they profess, there must be something worse on the one hand, and something better on the other, than their opinions, existing in their minds. For surely, no truth can be clearer than this, that every effect must agree with its cause.

present a much more pleasing illustration of Christianity, than they have hitherto done. But if I should be found to be correct in the above particulars, I shall have acted towards them the part of a friend, by telling them the plain, though unpalatable, truth; and my fervent prayer will be, that it may not have been told them in vain.

A DISSENTER FROM TRINITARIANISM.

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS AT WIGAN.

No. III.

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."—*Solomon.*

THE men who can distinguish with so much accuracy, what I am going to say before I open my mouth, or what I am going to write before I have taken up my pen, must have a much more nice and penetrating discernment into the contents of other men's brains than Sancho Panza's father had in wine; who perceived a "twang of iron, and also of leather, in a cask, at the bottom of which was afterwards found a key with a leather thong tied to it."

No, Mr. Editor, before they, the Trinitarians, publish a reply to what I am about to write, let them answer what has been already written and printed by us since the close of the year 1823. Let them look back into the running account, which they have obliged us to keep with them, in consequence of our never being able to bring them to any thing like prompt payment. We have drawn upon these gentlemen several times, but no acceptance, no not one up to this time but bills constantly returned so that here is stock, interest, profit, and compound interest to be called for all at once, it will not be a light pull for them, but come up they must or take the consequences, for we are determined to close accounts and cut connection.

If we, Mr. Editor, as no doubt is clear to you, and must be I should think to all who will but examine the account between us; if we, I say, had not been strong in capital we never could

have carried on with such long winded customers till now. It is to be hoped however, that they will now come up with full payment, and make the *amende honourable* which the case demands. If not they may soon expect to be Gazetted and to see their names in the Bankrupt list, which to an honest man is almost as bad as seeing himself in the pillory. Let them look into their accounts and if they find they cannot answer our just demands upon them, nor offer us some dividend though small, the least they can do is to acknowledge the debt, and if we find that like the certain creditor who had two debtors, they really have nothing wherewith to pay, perhaps like him we may sign their certificate; for we should not like to be deemed hard hearted. And lest the memories of the Debtors should not be so good as those of the Creditors, I shall present them with that part of their outstanding and longstanding debt, of which I happen to have knowledge. To wit.

Trinitarians of Wigan, Debtors to Unitarians of ditto, for articles of the literary and controversial kind, since the close of the year 1823, up to this time, Sept. 1825, as follow :

To thirty five questions proposed for the consideration of the advocates of the Deity of Jesus Christ, by a Friend to Free Inquiry. These questions mostly founded on passages of scripture, and having an immediate bearing on the subject.

To thirty four questions on the doctrine of atonement, addressed to the advocates of that popular doctrine, or satisfaction for sin, to which are appended the four questions mentioned in our last, relating to that doctrine more immediately as a commercial transaction stipulation, contract, bargain or job, by A Berean.

To the main pillar of Trinitarianism.

To plain matters of fact, in an important case.

To a work entitled "A peep at the man in the clouds," a title which has been acknowledged as strikingly descriptive of that unknown Trinitarian Oracle, who in imitation of the ancient heathen one at Delphos, enshrined himself in mystery, and from his sable throne issued some questions to the Unitarians, relative to metaphysics, to abstract beings, natures, spiritual subsistences, essences, occult qualities and such like things, drawn from the writings of men called the fathers and saints, such saints as Athanasius, and the old musty tomes of those confused geniuses of ancient times, the works of schoolmen of the dark ages. And for an ex-

posure of the conduct of this Trinitarian Oracle, you are requested to look into a peep at the man in the clouds by which the said Oracle was dumb-founded and has been ever since in the dumps.

To a number of Trinitarian Syllogisms;—and last, though not least,

To The Trinitarian improved version of the scripture contrasted with the received version; by Berenius.

Now this, Mr. Editor, I call a heavy bill, a large demand, but a just one, now can the Trinitarians answer it; I do not mean pay it off with a sponge, as some talk of paying the national debt, but in solid cash? If they can do it, will they do it? If they can and will not, it proves them dishonest. If they cannot discharge it, why let them say so; and not like old toppers run up a new score while the old one stares them in the face, or surely their friends will cry shame on them. Having laid before them this statement of their account, with the Wigan Unitarians, having pointed out to them their long arrears and cautioned them against augmenting it, one has reason to expect that if they have a particle of honesty remaining they will make some attempt at liquidation.

Leaving these things at present to their consideration and the judgment of the public, I have a word or two more to say to them on the doctrine of Atonement before the ground will be fairly cleared for what may follow. In my study of the New Testament where that system of christianity which most concerns me chiefly lies, I have paid deep attention to Matthew's gospel, and what has struck me as singularly remarkable is that with the exception of a single obscure expression occurring in xxvi. 28, about the remission of sins, it will not be easy for the advocates of Atonement to find a single circumstance in all that gospel that can, by any construction, be made to give the least countenance to that doctrine; while there are many things in that gospel decisively against it. Here then is a gospel, a whole gospel, without an Atonement. I mention Matthew, because I believe his copy with the exception of the two first chapters was the copy used by the first christians, because I consider him the most copious, perspicuous, and clear writer of the four, the most particular in his statements of facts and doctrines. Nor if this doctrine had

appeared to him of that importance to mankind which it does to the Trinitarian Calvinists, or indeed of any importance at all, can it be supposed that he would have passed it by unnoticed?

This writer, Matthew, does not represent either John the Baptist or our Saviour as ever teaching the doctrine of atonement, or any thing naturally approaching to it. The whole subject of the preaching of John, Matt. iii. 8, is repentance, and works meet for, suitable to, consistent with repentance. The whole of Christ's Sermon on the mount is a lesson of the purest morality; and in that finest of all prayers included in it ch. vi. 9—13. commonly called "The Lord's prayer," we are taught to pray to be forgiven as we ourselves forgive; and to this is added v. 14. 15, if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Is the doctrine of atonement, of satisfaction taught here? On what conditions do men generally forgive each other? do they always stick on satisfaction? If God will not, does not or cannot forgive without a rigid satisfaction, ought men to do so? can they do better than imitate God? Now, how do these satisfactionists forgive? do they always stick up for rigid satisfaction when any one has offended or injured them by accident or otherwise? If they do I shall say of them as Jacob did, Gen. xlix. 5—7, cursed be their anger for it is fierce, and their wrath for it is cruel. O my soul come not thou into their secret, &c. And if they do not require their anger always to be atoned, are they not readier to forgive than they believe God to be? And if they are, are they not better tempered than God? And if all men were to stand upon full satisfaction and would not forgive without it, what a world would this be? Bad enough now but much worse then.

But if this be the way in which God acts, as the Trinitarians tell us he does act, towards his creatures, ought they, are they bound, to act any otherwise; or even better, towards each other than he does towards them? If the satisfaction be not made then, which they demand, may they not retain their anger untill it is, and for ever if it be not or cannot be made? Would not this be to imitate their God? and could they increase his displeasure by doing so? Let the Trinitarians, the advocates of the

atonement, consider these things, and reply to them, and not treat us with silent contempt until they have proved our arguments deserve it. In the Parable of the King who took account of his servants, Matt. xviii. 23, designed to illustrate the doctrine of forgiveness, the master forgives from compassion only, without any atonement or satisfaction made to himself, or any other person for him v. 27, "The Lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him and forgave him the debt." And to shew the extent to which Jesus would have this principle carried, he requires that we forgive an offending brother, not only seven times, but seventy times seven. v. 22. In the description of the day of Judgment, ch. 25, are the righteous received on account of any atonement? does the Judge say any thing about it? the occasion for mentioning it was most natural. And in the parable of the Prodigal Son, where is the atonement? not the fattened calf; no, surely the son had repented, returned, was forgiven and received before that was killed? That was killed to feast on and make merry, because he who was dead was alive again, because the lost one was found. Read and understand.

J. R.

THE PLAIN SPEAKER.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

IN the course of last year, an interesting little periodical work, entitled "*The Plain Speaker*," lifted up its voice to the astonishment, I believe, of all who heard it. But as it has not spoken for some time past, I am afraid it is dead, or that some who do not love *plain speaking*, have, by an act of cruel violence cut out its tongue. I hope my fears will prove groundless, and that it is not only in being, but in vigour, and is resolved to speak as plainly as ever.

My object, Mr. Editor, is to make inquiries, through the medium of your useful publication, respecting it. What has become of it? Are we to be gratified with the sound of its voice again? Or has it spoken, to speak no more? If it has, I have only to say, I shall deeply regret it, and shall think, with numbers more, that it has not done its duty.

A LOVER OF PLAIN SPEAKING.

*On the Ceremony of Confirmation, as practised by the Sect
called the Established Church of England.*

(Continued from p. 63.)

Q. "You say that Confirmation is ratifying your Baptismal Vow, tell me how many things your Godfathers and Godmothers then promised for you? A. Three,"

It is generally taken for granted that the Baptismal vow, is the vow of the child in whose name it is made, but it is in reality the promise and vow of the sponsors; it is literally their own. It is made in the name and on behalf of the Child, but being without its consent, it cannot be binding upon it. James may promise that John shall at some future period perform a certain action, of which he then knows nothing; but John being ignorant of and therefore not willing nor consenting to this, no principle of justice can bind him to the fulfilment of a promise, made without his privity by a self constituted proxy. If the baptismal vow could by sophistry be imputed to the child (a most preposterous idea) what is the meaning of the reply to the first question, before quoted? The child now arrived at "years of discretion" professes to take that vow upon himself. To profess to take upon himself to ratify and confirm his own act and deed is sheer nonsense, but if he speaks thus of the act of another person on his behalf, we then can understand him. In fact the very mode of expression here used, is a proof that the baptismal vow is not his but that of his Godfathers and Godmothers. These redoubtable personages promise three things. They promise, before the Almighty searcher of hearts, whether sincerely or not may not be easily determined, on behalf of an infant of whose future situation in life, of whose future habits, inclinations and principles, they are completely ignorant, that he shall pursue one undeviating course of rectitude. The promise made cannot be fulfilled by human agency; in many instances this is not even attempted, and is therefore an impious mockery. Although merely considered as a necessary part of the ceremony, and as such engaged in with little or no consideration, yet it cannot be denied that Sponsors take upon themselves an awful responsibility, in thus pledging themselves before God to accomplish that which no human power can achieve. Certainly when viewed in the aggregate, the *things* which they promise to perform do not terrify, by their immense numerical amount, they are only three; but in detail are sufficient to make the stoutest heart tremble. This number *three* is celebrated for its tremendous potency in occult and magical science, nor is it here out of character, but in apparently humble unpretending guise, it comprehends the rejection of the world, and the lusts thereof, the total renouncement of all sin, as well as man's nature, and

the abjuration of the Devil and his works. There is further comprehended under this mystical but marvellous *three*, a firm belief in all the articles of the Christian faith, particularly in the ineffable mystery of the Holy Trinity, in the redemption of man by God the Son, and the sanctification of the elect by God the Holy Ghost, and lastly, is included a perfect obedience to the ten commandments of Moses. That all these points are embraced by the *three things* promised, will soon be proved.

Q. "What is the FIRST? A. That I should renounce the Devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh."

Although this is only one of the "*things*," the first on the list yet it is subdivided into three parts, with each of which, we are favored with a concise explanation.

Q. "Who is the Devil? A. The prince of the fallen angels.—What are his works? All sin in general; but especially pride and envy, hatred and malice, lying and slandering, tempting men to sin and cruelty."

We are often told of the handy work of the Devil, and in truth we here find that he has got his due. He is well known to be a most indefatigable being, to which must now be added that not only does the Devil figure as an omnipotent tempter, but *his works* also "tempt men to sin and cruelty."

Q. "What is it to renounce the Devil and his Works? A. It is to forsake and oppose them.—Why are you to renounce the Devil? Because he is the great enemy of God, and of my Salvation.—Why are you to renounce his works? Because they are evil and lead to death."

Here endeth the first part of the first of the three promises made at Baptism. It simply comprises, not only a renouncement but an opposition to the Prince of fallen Angels, which said Prince surely deserves it, he being the contumacious enemy of man's Salvation. "All sin in general is likewise renounced and forsaken," a sweeping clause far more easily promised than performed.

The enumeration of the Devil's works (his *especial* ones, be it remarked,) promiscuously blend cause and effect in one common mass, and presents a fine specimen of theological hair splitting.

Q. What do you understand by the pomps and vanity of this wicked world? Excess in dress, the vain amusements and sinful customs of the world, and whatever is opposed to Christian humility and moderation.—Are you commanded to renounce these? St. John says, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world, (1 John, ii. 15, 16,) —What do you mean by the flesh? The wickedness of our nature.—Are

all born in sin? Yes: that which is born of the flesh is flesh. John iii. 6."

This is the second part of the first promise. And like its predecessor, all this may be very glibly renounced but is not as easily reduced to practice. As the special works of the Devil, have been thought worthy of a separate renouncement, this second part cannot relate to those works, nor be classified under the head of "all sin in general" unless indeed which may be suspected the whole passage savours strongly of tautology, Not daring however to advance such a charge, we may conclude, that "excess in dress, the vain amusements and sinful customs of the world, &c. &c." do not partake of the nature of "sin in general," at least when used by those discreet personages who seek the benefits of Confirmation.

It is well however that "the pomps and vanity of this wicked world" are renounced in proper form, it is well too, else some might fall into error on the subject, that they are explained to mean, "excess in dress, and vain amusements, and the sinful customs of the world." That Confirmation itself might peradventure be placed on the list of sinful customs, is not to be supposed. So pure and holy a ceremony cannot possibly "tempt men to sin" although narrow minded men might conceive that it granted an immunity for the commission of wickedness. No; no; the good Bishop wearing vestments emblematic of innocence itself, must be sincere as well in his declaration of sins forgiven, as in his certificate of the extension of the "favor and gracious goodness of the Almighty and Everlasting God." Nor, without being liable to the charge of not having renounced those especial works of the Devil, "malice, lying, and slandering," would any unsophisticated youth who knelt before his episcopal right reverend Father, give encouragement to the unhallowed idea, that the sounding titles of the dignitary before him, and the pomp of his dress, and the imposing nature of the ceremony, and the courtly attentions of the assembled Clergy, and the beauty and fashion which usually congregate on these solemn occasions, can have any connection with the "pomps" of the world. Nor would the thronging crowd of obsequious menials and the splended equipages which arrested his attention, and perchance, the fine new holiday suit in which he is himself equipped, and the giddy frivolites of his surrounding companions be capable of being identified with those vanities he has so solemnly renounced. No; he, with St. John "Loves not the world neither the things that are in the world;" neither loves he "the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." He pays no respect to the gold ring and the gay clothing, but looking upon the splendour around him with the consciousness of having renounced "pride envy and slandering," he esteems all he sees to be genuine proofs of "true christian humility and moderation."

(To be continued.)

JESUS CHRIST A SACRIFICE.

To a young friend who has wished for our opinion of the meaning of Hebrews vii. 27, we submit the following remarks from Mr. Belsham's Exposition.

In what sense, can it justly be said that Christ "offered up a sacrifice for his own sins?" It is universally agreed, that Christ in his moral character was sinless: it is impossible, therefore, that he should have offered sacrifice for his own moral offences, for he had none. Grotius and Crellius, by *the sins of Christ* understand his sufferings, which were terminated by his death: but this interpretation, unnatural in itself, is successfully opposed by Whitby. The plain interpretation is, that the sins of Christ were merely ceremonial, such as the high-priest was accustomed to expiate on the day of atonement, ch. ix. 7. Our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning the priesthood: ver. 14. He was, therefore, as to the priesthood: in an unconsecrated state; that is ceremonially a sinner. And as Aaron was consecrated to his priestly office by the blood of animal sacrifices, so Christ was consecrated to his nobler office by his own blood. In this sense he offered a sacrifice for his own sins. This way of representing the death of Christ was adapted to conciliate the prejudices of the Hebrew Christians. Also, as the posterity of Aaron were successively removed by death (ver. 23) successive priests were consecrated by successive sacrifices. But Christ lives for ever, a consecrated priest, and has no successor. Further, priests under the law were subject to infirmity, and might desecrate themselves by ceremonial pollution and inadvertent acts: ver. 28. It was necessary, therefore, that they should be reconsecrated by daily and by annual sacrifices; but Christ being incapable of ceremonial desecration, his one sacrifice is sufficient. He is now perfect for ever.

And, let it be remarked, IN THE VERY SAME SENSE in which Christ offered a sacrifice for his own sins, in that very sense did he offer sacrifice for the sins of the people. There is no distinction. But the sins of Christ were not moral, but ceremonial:

the contrary supposition is absurd. Such, then, and no other, are those sins of the people for which Christ offered a sacrifice ; like his own, they are not moral, but ceremonial. No sacrifices are appointed for moral offences, either under the old dispensation or the new ; no atonement, no appeasing of divine wrath, no satisfaction to offended justice. But as Christ by his one sacrifice consecrated himself for ever, transferred himself from a ceremonially unholy to a ceremonially holy state ; so, exactly in the same way, those who believe the gospel are by the sacrifice of Christ made ceremonially pure. From sinners they become saints ; they are transferred from the community of unbelievers and enemies to that of believers who are reconciled to God ; and from this holy community nothing can exclude them but wilful apostasy, voluntary transgression : and for these no sacrifice is provided.

What the writer means is this : that as Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priestly office by sprinkling of the real blood of the animal victim, Lev. viii. 30. so converts to the gospel are consecrated to God by the figurative application of the blood of Christ ; and he gives this view of the purpose of the death of Christ, merely to reconcile the minds of the Hebrews to a fact, to them the most mortifying that could possibly be conceived, the crucifixion of the Messiah.

Sabbath keeping—Wisdom of our Ancestors.

The following is taken from the Oriental Herald. We recommend it particularly to the attention of the professed Evangelians of the day, and the admirers of Charles the Martyr.

Let us reflect a moment on the “wisdom of our ancestors,” respecting this virtue of Sabbath keeping. We suppose the most religious and virtuous martyr King Charles I. will be allowed to be one of our wise ancestors. He thought, and his favorite Archbishop thought also, that the best possible way of serving God on Sunday was, to get your head broken with a cudgel, or to break your neighbour’s. The King and the Archbishop trumped up between them a “Book of Sports,” enumerating the various “recreations” which were *commanded* to be practised on the Lord’s day ; among which were “dancing, leaping, vaulting, shooting, morris-dancers, wrestling, cudgel-playing,” &c. and so intent was the martyr King upon having the Sabbath

celebrated after this most pious fashion, that he published a declaration, expressly enjoining it; and it was further ordered, that all clergymen who refused to read this Book of Sports to their parishoners, should be imprisoned or suspended.—Now we need say no more to convince our readers how strangely we have degenerated on this head from the “wisdom of our ancestors.” We of the 19th century have decided, that it is a crime punishable at law even to clip the whiskers or our beards on the Sabbath, and an irreligious country barber has actually been fined, in the course of this present year, for operating on that day on his brother’s chin, as a warning to all his brethren of the *lower orders*, that it were much better for them to emulate the Jews in length of beard, than to flourish their razors on a Sunday. This is setting the “wisdom of our ancestors” at naught with a vengeance. But, supposing that it is a crime to pass a piece of sharp steel over a man’s chin on a certain day of the week, and that a wise legislator ought to empower magistrates to fine poor people for trimming up each other’s persons on that day, it is also a crime for those same poor people to absent themselves from public worship on the sabbath, and it is accounted indecent for them to go to Church with a long beard. Necessity frequently compels them to labour late on the preceding night; wearied nature demands repose when their labour is concluded; they cannot therefore prepare themselves on Saturday to appear decently in Church, the barber is fined if he shaves them on Sunday; they themselves may be fined if they go not to the Church; their sense of decency, the pride which is natural to every human being, forbid them to go in an unclean and despicable condition. What are they to do?—*Oriental Herald*.

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

From Discourses on the offices and character of Jesus Christ
by Henry Ware, Jun.

On the meaning of the word Atonement.

HERE it is to be observed, first of all, that this is the only place in the New Testament in which the word occurs.* It is not again used in the christian scriptures by any writer, in any connection, in relation to any subject. It is never used in relation to the terms of pardon, or acceptance with God, to explain the ground of the sinner’s hope, or to illustrate any of the works or offices of Christ; neither in relation to his life, his doctrines, his sufferings or his death. This is a fact of which we should be thoroughly aware; that the writers of the New Testament, throughout

* Rom v. 11.

that volume, have never found occasion to introduce the word atonement. We meet with it no where except in our text.

In the next place it is to be remarked, that as occurring in this passage, it is universally acknowledged to be a clear and unquestionable mistranslation of the original word. In every other case in which the same word occurs it is rendered *reconciliation*; as when the apostle says, "he hath given unto us the ministry of reconciliation." So it should have been rendered here. Doddridge remarks, that it has so evident reference to the word *reconciled* in the context, that "it is surprising it should have been rendered by so different a word in our version. Other commentators speak to the same effect.

A single glance at the connection in which the text stands will satisfy us that this interpretation is necessary to the sense of the passage. For there is an obvious allusion to the language of the verse immediately preceding. "If," says the apostle, "when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Then follows our text, in which he declares that those who are thus *reconciled*, "rejoice in God through Jesus Christ, by whom they have received *this reconciliation*."

A glance at the word atonement itself, may also convince us that the true meaning is reconciliation. The remark has been made, and may be profitably repeated, that *to atone*, in its primary use, signified to *reconcile*. It is formed by the union of the two words, *at* and *one*. Persons who have once differed, on being reconciled, are set *at one*. To put *at one*, or to *at-one*, is originally to *reconcile*; consequently *atonement* is *reconciliation*. This we know to have been the signification of the word as it was used at the period when our translation of the Bible was made; it was undoubtedly the meaning attached to it by the translators.

Let us remember then, that the word "atonement," in the only instance in which it is found in the New Testament, is the same with "reconciliation." But what is to be understood by reconciliation?

To answer this will require few words; for it is the comprehensive term which expresses, in one view of the subject, the entire purpose of the Saviour's mission. The world was estranged from God, worshipping false divinities, and pursuing evil practices. Its inhabitants had wandered from God, and were "aliens," "afar off." He sent his Son to bring them near, to acquaint them with his character, to restore them to their allegiance, to make them his friends, and thus, in one word, to reconcile them. Hence the apostle calls the ministry of the gospel the ministry of "reconciliation;" because "God is in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." This he represents to be the burden of the message with which the preachers of the word are charged—"we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

ON THE DEITY OF CHRIST.

Nantwich, Feb. 16th, 1826.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

Having been refused insertion of the annexed in the Chester Courant, and for no other reason but as the editor of that paper says, "it would lead to an interminable controversy." I hope you will give it an insertion in the Reflector—You will perceive by the letter I subjoin, what gave rise to the remarks I have made; which letter you may as well insert—

Yours truly,

JOHN COOPER.

To the Editor of the Chester Courant.

SIR,

In your last week's paper I saw some poetry, the author of which calls himself J. W. S. It closed with the word *Emmanuel*; to which he has appended a note of explanation, apparently for the purpose of lugging in his favourite hypothesis. I was forcibly struck with his method of elucidation, and thought, that I might also be permitted to act upon the same principle, in order that the fallacy of that *gentleman's gloss* might appear to the same readers of your valuable miscellany—Trusting to your impartiality for the insertion of this,

I am Sir, Yours, &c.

J. C.

Nantwich, 25th October, 1825.

Copy of J. W. S's Note.

"The word *Emmanuel* is an Hebrew word, and signifies from scripture interpretation GOD WITH US, which clearly proves the divinity of OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, who it is expressly said shall save his HIS people from their sins. Matt. i. 21. If we are wise therefore, we shall betake ourselves by a timely repentance to the GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST, who only can save us from our sins, as he has expressly said, if ye believe not that I AM he ye shall die in your sins—See John viii. 24. which words I AM are the same thing as if he had called himself JEHOVAH, and he further says I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first and the last, THE ALMIGHTY Rev. i. 8. 11. St. John also says that the world was made by HIM, and St. Paul says that all the *Angels* worship HIM—Heb. i. 6.

Surely then we christians should join the heavenly host, and worship HIM that sitteth on the throne, and liveth for ever and ever, saying with them, "Thou art worthy O LORD, to receive *glory* and *honor* and *power*, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," Rev. iv. 10, 11.

Nantwich.

J. W. S.

J. W. S. says, "the word *Emmanuel* is an Hebrew word and signifies from scripture interpretation GOD WITH US, which clearly proves the divinity of our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

If J. W. S. speaks the truth, there must be many more Deities besides Christ—Elijah is an Hebrew word, and as J. W. S. says, "signifies from scripture interpretation," *God the Lord*—Elihu; *my God himself*, and which does as fully prove the divinity of Elijah, and Elihu as J. W. S.'s method does the Deity of Christ. The name of any being does not prove its nature, any more than the Hebrew word SALMON, which signifies peaceable, perfect, constitutes a *man* to be so who is called by that name—J. W. S. in the next place tells us that Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews. If ye believe not that I AM he, ye shall die in your sins, John viii. 24. This is certainly a puerile shift, our translators have very wisely supplied the pronoun *he* to make the passage sense, and how can J. W. S. make sense without it? And even if it did mean what J. W. S. would wish to make it, by the same method Moses would become a deity, "I have made thee a God [Aleim,] to Pharaoh." The same will apply to Rev. i. 8, 11, only I may add, that whatever might or power, Jesus possessed he declared he *received it*—And I do suppose that J. W. S. will allow with myself that Christ knew better than either of us, who said, "I can do nothing of myself, my father is greater than all," John viii. 28, 29.

J. W. S. exhorts in his note to the worship of Christ If he only means that reverence which we should have for him as the Son of God I perfectly coincide with him—but if he means *religious homage* I must differ from him. Jesus says, John iv. "that the hour cometh and now is when the TRUE WORSHIPERS shall worship the Father—God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." J. W. S. certainly knows that Jesus said "handle me and feel me, a spirit hath not flesh and bones;" of course he could not be that spirit which was to be worshipped. Jesus also says "in that day ye shall ask me nothing but whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, believing he will give to you," John xvi. 23. I sincerely hope J. W. S. will reconsider the subject, and be brought to receive the pure truth as it is in Jesus, then he will be preserved from idolatry, and no longer worship a Creature instead of the Creator. "Thou shalt have none other Gods but me, (not us) For though there are lords many and gods many, unto us there is but one God the Father."

POETRY.

From the United States Literary Gazette

AN APRIL DAY.

When the warm sun that brings
Seed-time and harvest, has returned
again,
'Tis sweet to visit the still wood,
where springs
The first flower of the plain.

I love the season well
When forest glades are teeming with
bright forms,
Nor dark and many-folded clouds fore-
tell
The coming-in of storms.

From the earth's loosened mould
The sapling draws its sustenance, and
thrives:

Though stricken to the heart with win-
ter's cold,
The drooping tree revives.

The softly-warbled song
Comes through the pleasant woods,
and coloured wings
Glance quick in the bright sun, that
moves along
The forest openings.

And when bright sunset fills
The silver woods with light, the green
slope throws
Its shadows in the hollows of the hills
And wide the upland glows.

And when the day is gone,
In the blue lake the sky o'erreaching
far

Is hollowed out, and the moon dips
her horn,
And twinkles many a star.

Inverted in the tide
Stand the gray rocks, and trembling
shadows throw,
And the fair trees look over, side by
side,
And see themselves below.

Sweet April!—many a thought
Is wedded unto thee, as hearts are wed;
Nor shall they fail, till to its autumn
brought
Life's golden fruit is shed.

HYMN.

*What is your life?**From Bowring's Matins and Vespers.*

I HAVE seen the morning vapour
Scatter'd by the eye of day;
I have seen the evening taper
Shine, and glimmer, and decay;
And bethought me, as I stood,
These are man's similitude.

Man is like a vapour flying
With the twilight o'er the dell:
Man is like a pale lamp dying
In its solitary cell—
Light and shade—and ill and good—
Such is man's vicissitude.

Man is like a vapour, blending
With the dew of morning's breath;
Man is like a pale lamp tending
To its melancholy death;
Neither spared by whirlwinds rude—
Such is man's similitude.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A Correspondent signing himself "*A Young Friend*," has sent us the following Question, "In what sense are we to understand the expression in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ch. vii. 27?" Not willing that he should wait a month for an answer, we have made a quotation from Mr. Belsham's "*Exposition*" &c. p. 90. And solicit from our correspondents their opinion on the same passage.

Philologos in our next.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

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MAY 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

*The following observations are copied from Bellamy's Bible;
we recommend them to the attention of our readers.*

JOSHUA VI, 20.

THAT THE WALL FELL FLAT DOWN.

IF we take into consideration the many errors made by the translators, and attend to the true and literal translation of *one* word, confirmed by its radical meaning in every other part of Scripture, it will not appear that any miracle was done when the wall of Jericho fell. That this was a miracle, has been the belief of many ages; but it should be remembered that it is a belief founded on the erroneous versions, made in the first ages of the Christian church, the Greek and Latin, from which all the European translations were made, and never from the original Hebrew text *only*; an incontrovertible proof of which we have in this verse.

In those times of warfare, when the soldiers could approach to the walls of a city, when an army of hundreds of thousands were before it, by the customary methods, we find it was no uncommon thing to throw down a wall by *undermining* it. In 1 Kings, xx. 30, we read, that the people by this kind of stratagem caused a wall to fall before 27,000 men; and this undoubtedly was a fact respecting the wall of Jericho. All the men of war were commanded to compass the city, and to shout which was the signal for the onset. The power of this immense army was irresistible; and a breach in the wall was made, through which they entered the city. Had it been said, that without any human effort the wall was caused to fall by the power of God, it would have been conclusive. But as no such remark was made by the sacred writer, and as the presence of

all the men of war, all the hundreds of thousands of fighting men was as necessary as the priests to sound the trumpets ; there can be no doubt that the wall of Jericho fell by the same means that caused other walls to fall—by the superior power of the besiegers. Beside, it must appear evident to the rational reader, that this must have been the fact ; for this reason : had the wall fallen by the power, instead of the providence of God, in the usual way, there would have been no necessity for the whole army of Israel to have marched round the city for seven days. No reason is given, no end is obtained by this delay of seven days. The thing remained to be done on the seventh, as on the first day. This does not appear to be consistent with INFINITE WISDOM. Some great end would have been proposed by such delay, on a supposition that the wall was to fall at the shout of the army, by the power of God ; such as the accomplishment of the thing for which the Hebrews were brought out of Egypt ; viz. the total abolition of idolatry in the land of Canaan ; for it must be allowed, that such a miraculous interposition of divine power would not only have convinced the people of Jericho that the great Creator was manifesting his power to abolish idolatry ; but all the nations of Canaan would have been convinced, and converted to the true worship of God. This would have rendered the shedding of blood, and of innocent blood, “ crying and smiling infants, who could not offend,” not only in Jericho, but in all the land of Canaan, according to the common translation, unnecessary. This, however, cannot be as it is stated in the common translation, for this incontrovertible reason. Had the children of Jericho been put to death as it is positively said in the common translation, it then necessarily follows that those same children were put to death. not for their own sin, but for the sin of their fathers. This would be a plain contradiction to the divine command, which is worthy of God, as it is recorded in Deut. xxiv. 16, *The father shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers : every man shall be put to death for his own sin*, Some have supposed that this command in Deuteronomy was only a command to the magistrates, that they should not put the children to death for the

sins of their fathers. But it would then follow that the magistrates had been in the habit of putting the children to death for the sins of their fathers; an example of which is not to be found in any part of the Bible among the Hebrews.

Therefore as the customary usage of war was resorted too on the reduction of every other city in the land of Canaan (for we find on the reduction of the very next city, Ai, Joshua was directed to *choose out thirty thousand mighty men*, and was even directed to use the customary methods by *force* and *stratagem*, ch. viii. 2, to conquer and take the city,) the enquiring reader, who wishes earnestly to know the truth, necessarily asks, If there were no way to conquer Jericho, but by causing the wall to fall by divine power, why was Joshua directed to to choose out thirty thousand mighty men, to go against Ai? And why was he directed to take it by setting an ambush to surprise the inhabitants when they came out of the city, and by that means get into the city? Had the divine power been exerted to cause the wall of Jericho to fall, would not the same divine power have been exerted to have caused the wall of Ai to have fallen, instead of directing Joshua to have recourse to the customary usages of war, *force* and *stratagem*, in order to get possession of the city?

Therefore, as no miracle is said to be done on the taking of Jericho, only that they were told by Joshua the way by which the city was to be taken, viz. that if the people of Jericho did not open the gates, in the seven days, as an agreement to renounce idolatry, that the wall should be *overthrown*, we are constrained to admit that Jericho was taken in the same way that all the cities of Canaan were taken.

The rational, scriptural, and obvious conclusion is, that by this mode of proceeding during the seven days, it was to elude the observation of the people of Jericho while the sappers, having found a convenient place to undermine the wall, the Hebrews would then be prepared to throw down such part of the wall, and thus by this breach to enter the city. This we shall find to be in perfect agreement with the Hebrew text.

The word which has been erroneously translated is תחתיה *tachteyah*, which is rendered, *down flat*; but this word is *one* and cannot be translated both by an *adjective* and an *adverb*.

Throughout the Scripture it always means the very *lowest* part of of the thing under consideration, which here is the *wall*; and it was that part of the wall which was תחתיה *tachteyah*, *beneath*, or *under* the view of the city; and therefore this word should be rendered as it is in other passages. See Gen. xxxiv. 8, BENEATH, or *below Bethel*, that is, a place *lower* than the city—*under*, Jer. iii. 6. Evidently meaning that part of the wall of Jericho which was תחתיה *tachteyah*, *beneath*, or *lower* than the view of the city. So that it evidently means the *lowest* part of the wall *under*, or *beneath* the view of the city, which they had undermined, and should be rendered *beneath*. The words ותפל החומה תחתיה, *vatipol hachomah tachteyah*, are rendered, *that the wall fell down flat*. It must be evident to the intelligent reader, that if the wall *fell*, it must necessarily fall *down*; and it must also necessarily fall *flat*. So that the words *down* and *flat* are expletive, and make the passage to read absurdly. Accordingly we find no authority for them in the Hebrew.

The clause then reads, according to the *Hebrew*, to *Reason* and to that *order of proceeding* which the Hebrews were obliged to adopt in the reduction of every city in the land of Canaan, viz. by *force* or *stratagem*. Heb. *And the wall fell beneath*.

Such is the statement concerning the falling of the wall of Jericho, as recorded in the Hebrew. A miracle has been held forth for ages—a miracle for which there was no necessity; for the people of Ai knew they had only to contend against the physical strength of the Hebrews, and therefore they came forth and fought them. But had the wall of Jericho fallen by the power of God only, the inhabitants of Ai would not have had the presumption to have opposed the Hebrews in defiance of the power of God.

Things that are inconsistent with the dignity, goodness, and mercy of the Creator of the Universe, and which are often fraught with immorality, as they are recorded in the authorized version, cannot be commanded by God, nor communicated by the sacred writers. Therefore such statements as *the destruction of all the first born in Egypt*, “crying and smiling infants,” who could not offend, said to be destroyed for the faults of the

king, even *impiously said to be destroyed by the hand of God*, the utter destruction of all the nations in the land of Canaan, men and women, infant and suckling, cannot be consistent with the goodness and mercy of God. Nor can the standing still of the sun and moon at the command of Joshua, that he might overcome his enemies, be credited; because it is said that they were overcome, that they had fled, and had shut themselves up in their fenced cities, when according to the common translation the sun and the moon were commanded to stand. Such *imperative presumption* on the part of man, so inconsistent with the necessity of the people, and the impiety of supposing that the merciful Creator could destroy the innocent for the fault of a pagan king, have been brought forth in profound ignorance of the original Hebrew text. Such impious crimes, I say, have been laid at the door of INFINITE *Mercy!* through a profound ignorance of the Hebrew text, and have been sanctified by *bigotry* and *superstition*, to the dishonour of the holy character of God, and the discredit of religion and the bible.

But these *murder-loving monsters*, mentioned in Dan. viii. 25. *bigotry* and *superstition* to consecrated errors, which have made the nations drunk with the wine of their filthiness, Rev. xvii, 2. are passing away to the sepulchres of hoary-headed ignorance where they will for ever remain as monuments of the weakness and folly of eighteen centuries.

TACITUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

THE testimony of Tacitus to the existence of Christians in his day, and his accounts of the sufferings to which they were condemned by the brutal and cruel Nero, have never been disputed by any person acquainted with history. The Rev. Robert Taylor, the Secretary of what is called "The Christian Evidence Society," has lately, asserted *ex Cathedrâ*, that the passage is spurious, and was interpolated by Leo. X. in the 16th Century. On what authority Mr. T. has made this assertion is best known to the Rev. Secretary himself.

Nero being suspected of setting fire to the City of Rome, threw the blame upon the Christians and subjected them under this unfounded charge, to endure the most cruel sufferings.

“With this view (says Tacitus) he inflicted the most exquisite tortures on those men, who under the vulgar appellation of christians, were already branded with deserved infamy. They derived their name and origin from Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius, had suffered death, by the sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate. For a while this dire superstition was checked; but it again burst forth, and not only spread itself over Judea, the first seat of this mischievous sect, but was even introduced into Rome, the common asylum which receives and protects whatever is impure, whatever is atrocious. The confessions of those who were seized discovered a great multitude of their accomplices, and were all convicted, not so much for the crime of setting fire to the city, as for their hatred of human kind. They died in torments, and their torments were embittered by insult and derision. Some were nailed on crosses; others sewn up in the skins of wild beasts, and exposed to the fury of dogs: others again, smeared over with combustible materials, were used as torches to illuminate the darkness of the night. The gardens of Nero, were destined for the melancholy spectacle, which was accompanied with a horse race, and honoured with the presence of the emperor, who mingled with the populace in the dress and attitude of a charioteer. The guilt of the christians deserved indeed the most exemplary punishment; but the public abhorrence was changed into commiseration from the opinion that those unhappy wretches were sacrificed, not so much to the public welfare, as to the cruelty of a jealous tyrant. (*)

Upon this passage Gibbon has the following remarks: “The most sceptical criticism is obliged to respect the truth of this extraordinary fact, and the integrity of this celebrated passage of Tacitus. The former is confirmed by the diligent and accurate Suetonius, who mentions the punishment which Nero inflicted on the Christians, a sect of men who had embraced a new and criminal superstition. The latter may be proved by

(*) Tacit. Annal. xv. 44.

the consent of the most ancient manuscripts; by the inimitable character of the style of Tacitus: by his reputation, which guarded his text from the interpolations of pious fraud, and by the purport of his narration, which accused the first christians of the most atrocious crimes, without intimating that [they possessed any miraculous or even magical powers above the rest of mankind.]

The testimony of a heathen historian, and that of a professed unbeliever in Christianity, will no doubt have considerable weight with thinking men.

I shall not enter further at present on this subject, Mr. Beard, of Manchester, I understand, is about to publish in a separate Pamphlet his letters, on this passage, which appeared in the Republican.

I remain, your's respectfully,

PHILOLOGOS.

On the Ceremony of Confirmation, as practised by the Sect called the Established Church of England.

(Continued from p. 63.)

The aspirant for Confirmation is next taught that by the term "the flesh" is meant "the wickedness of our (man's) nature." Now "all the sinful lusts of the flesh," consequently all "the wickedness of our nature" is renounced at Baptism, and ratified at Confirmation!

The third part of the first *thing* promised by Baptismal Sponsors is indeed singular. It seems as if sins, yea, all sin, can be rejected at will, and that the very nature of man, his innate depravity can be dispensed with like a cast off garment. If this be the case the declamations of the *Evangelians*, respecting Original Sin, the worthlessness of man, nay his utter inability of himself to think a good thought, or perform a good action, are but incoherent ravings; for Godfathers and Godmothers are not necessarily models of piety and virtue, yet they without the least difficulty renounce "all sin in general"—birth sin being of course included.

But the articles of the church, oppose this conclusion. Her 9th Art. declares that Original Sin is "the fault and corruption of the nature of every man," that he "is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the

spirit; and therefore in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. *And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated, &c. &c.*

Here we are decisively informed, that it is impossible to renounce the sinful lusts of the flesh, alias the wickedness of our nature, for that doth remain &c. and yet at the font the Priest affirms that an infant baptised, is regenerated by God the Father with his Holy Spirit, is received as God's own child by adoption, and incorporated into his holy church. Is "the ministration of public Baptisms," or "the order of Confirmation" or "the xxxix. Articles of Religion," right? which is to "be proved by most certain warrants of holy scripture?" amidst such conflicting testimony, where is the truth?

The logical accuracy with which it is demonstrated that "all are born in sin," is worthy of the subject, all are born in sin, because that which is born of the flesh is flesh! Is Lord Eldon, Chancellor of England? Yea—because George IV. is son of George III. Verily, are there doctors in Israel, and can such things be?

We are next furnished with an enumeration (from Gal. v. 19, 21.) of the sinful lusts of the flesh, which lusts are duly renounced in the third clause of the first thing promised. Amongst them we find, "hatred, variance, wrath, strife, envyings, &c." The especial works of the Devil are renounced in the first clause, which includes "pride, envy, hatred and malice, &c." Thus it seems the sinful lusts of the flesh, and the handy work of his Satanic majesty are one and the same. Hence the conclusion is unavoidable, that as upon the authority of the 9th Article just referred to, man's own nature lusteth after and inclined to evil, therefore he possesses within himself the cause of all these sinful lusts, and of "all sin in general," without requiring the aid of that stupendous system, which have conjured up an almost omnipotent evil Being to rival and thwart the ruler of the Hosts of Heaven, and whose special province it is, to tempt men from the path of duty, and bring upon them the sentence of eternal damnation.

Satanic agency is now useless—unnecessary; "Othello's occupation's gone."

"Q. What is the second part of your Baptismal vow?

"A. That I should believe all the articles of the Christian Faith?"

Here again is a pretty bold promise. And who it may be asked is to determine what are those articles, the whole of which are to be believed? Is it the person who pledges himself, or his sponsors, or the officiating Bishop at Confirmation? It is possible that these parties may not possess exactly the same opinion on all points. Who is to judge? who is to define the standard by which belief is to be regulated? These articles, we are indeed kindly informed are "to be found in the Holy Scriptures," (see Questions) but this information is very far from solving the

difficulty; for who is to select them from those scriptures? The church herself cannot produce an unexceptionable authority. Her sons are divided, on points of faith—she has it is said “a Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy.” The diversity of opinion which pervades the christian world, is very obvious, and yet with a perfect knowledge of the existence of varying shades and even contradictory principles, a promise is put into the mouth of a human being, that he shall believe “all the articles of the Christian Faith;”—not one jot more, not one iota less. If indeed a man’s perception of things, was his own act and deed; if he could let in the flood tide of knowledge and information progressively upon his mind, or keep it out as he chose, as he can the emission of light into his dwelling, then such a promise might have a chance of being fulfilled, if he in whose favor it was made was in a state of seclusion and vigilantly guarded from a general intercourse with men and things, nor allowed to obtain any information, except through prescribed channels. But if he is to mix with society, and to behold events through every varying medium, then experience proves the truth of the assertion, that such an one, can no more circumscribe and bound the effects producible from increased knowledge, can no more decide what he shall or shall not believe, or attempt to govern his faith by his will, than he can rule the winds of heaven and cause them to obey his biddings.

But we are further informed that we may find these Articles ALL of which are (sincerely no doubt) to be believed, “briefly summed up in some part of the Catechism;” viz. the Apostles’ creed. This is a most singular admission. The Catechism upon which it is apparently founded, cautiously requiring a rehearsal of the Articles of belief does not rashly state, that “all the Articles of the Christian Faith” are contained in the Apostles’ creed. In fact that creed is an ARIAN creed, and he who teaches asserts or implies, that ALL the Articles are herein contained, must be an Arian, or Unitarian Christian. Yet from these Articles, thus briefly summed up in the Apostles’ Creed, the “young person” solemnly declares that he learns “to believe in God the Father who hath made him and all the world. Secondly in *God the Son, &c.*” The creed teaches a belief in Jesus Christ the only son of the Father, and not in God the Son. Whatever therefore such as come to be confirmed, may “learn to believe,” there is too much reason to fear that they learn to assert, what from some lips, would be designated a notorious falsehood.

The Apostles’ Creed cannot by the most violent straining and torturing be made to teach the doctrine of the Trinity, and therefore in a Trinitarian’s view does not contain *all* the articles &c. for one, and that a fundamental one, is omitted. It does not teach the eternity of hell torments, or the existence of the Devil; it is silent as the grave on Christ’s satisfaction for sin, the atonement he made, or the merits of his death; it is silent on the subject of God’s decrees by which some of his creatures are pre-

destinated to happiness, and others irrevocably doomed to everlasting tortures. What unblushing impudence then, must have penned the sentiment, that "*all* the Articles of the Christian Faith are briefly summed up," (briefly forsooth!) in the Apostles' creed, when the great majority of professing christians will look there in vain, for what they deem essential and all important principles? What still greater impudence to endeavor to impute to that Creed, doctrines, as evidently contained therein, when not a shadow of them is to found! One instance of this will be sufficient. The Apostles' Creed as it now stands, contains the following passage, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," and this is all which it contains on that subject; and yet the child who is going to participate in the privileges bestowed by Confirmation, is taught to assert that he learns from hence, from this same creed, to believe "thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost who sanctified me and all the elect people of God."(*) Either the child is not sincere in his assertion, or he possesses an amazing power of discrimination in thus finding a mountain where common eyes are unable to discern a mole-hill. Such "babes and sucklings," may be expected to become in after life, excellent commentators on obscure passages—and to shine in the knack of spiritualizing plain texts of scripture for the edification of the godly.

On the subject of faith, which appears to be unnecessarily introduced into the series of questions, it not being in any wise connected, with the "Order of Confirmation," it is sufficient to observe, that it will be difficult to reconcile it (together with its effects) with the doctrine inculcated in the xi. Article of the Church.

(*To be continued.*)

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS AT WIGAN.

NO. IV.

Sir Henry Wotton being once asked by a narrow minded bigot if he thought a Papist could be saved? replied, "you may be saved, without knowing that."

HAVING made those statements which I considered necessary, and to which I hope our Trinitarian opponents will pay particular attention, and make distinct replies I shall proceed to lay before your readers the second subject of discussion, proposed by a Unitarian to the consideration of which the Trinitarians assented. It was not whether persons of this or the other pecu-

(*) Incorrect as this is, it is the phraseology of the much lauded Catechism of the Church of England. The presumption of the answer, is consistent with the rest of the piece. Pray how can the child be conscious, as it asserts, that it is sanctified, by God the Holy Ghost?

liar faith or persuasion may be saved ; but what must we do to be saved ? Now although this question to whatever kind of salvation it refers, implies that in order to effect it something must be done ; and the scriptural answer given to the man who first proposed it proves that something might and can be done. Yet the Calvinists, our opponents, who though they dislike the epithet of the man retain his doctrines, would not go on to the discussion of this simple scriptural question without first introducing a previous question, viz. can man do the will of God ? This we had taken for granted as the scriptures do ; but man's ability to do God's will was by our opponents flatly denied, and vehemently disputed.

Thus we began, and as we fully expect that our opponents will lay before the public the manner in which they met our arguments, I shall proceed to state the grounds we took and how we maintained them. If I can do any thing to induce our opponents to print what they have written or others written for them, but which they have uttered in Park Lane Meeting-house, and the Bear-Paw room, Wigan, I shall be quite satisfied ; and if they do not do this it will prove them afraid to meet the public eye. I would just premise here the statements I shall make on the Unitarian side of the question, are those in which I have been engaged and for which I am responsible. I think I can best tell my own tale, if permitted to do it in my own way. And I have the vanity to think that one who for such a length of time has been actively engaged in these discussions may be permitted to do so.

I commenced by remarking that the question proposed is indeed an important one, that none can be more so, though from what I have already witnessed in the manner of our opponents, I have little or no expectation that it will be met by any thing like sober, fair, unbiassed, manly and rational discussion.

On this great question the mind naturally reverts to Acts ii. 37. Read this chapter and make out a gospel from it for yourselves, for most certainly it comprises the true and genuine gospel. Peter's Sermon was a gospel sermon, else about three thousand were converted by a sermon which was not a gospel one. In

reading this chapter pay attention to the language used by Peter in verses 36—38. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, &c. and in another place, Acts iii. 19, it is, Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out. Now I suppose it was God's will that they should do so because Peter commands and exhorts them to do so; but if it be true, as our opponents contend that men cannot do God's will, why are men commanded and exhorted to do that which according to them God knows and Peter must have known they could not and cannot do? Perhaps our opponents will explain, will account for this, will shew us the consistency, justice and propriety of this. There is a similar question by the jailer, Acts xvi. 30. Sirs, what must I do to be saved? and they, that is Paul and Silas, said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house. Now why should they exhort this man to believe on Christ if they knew at the same time that he could not? Where would have been the consistency of their doing so? Nay, to represent them as doing so, is to represent them either as joking, or as weak minded men. See *Matt.* xix. from 16—22. and behold one said unto him what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And Jesus said if thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments; he asked which? Jesus told him which, and enumerated them: he said he had kept, that is, observed, all these things from his youth, and Jesus did not contradict him. He then asked what lack I yet? Jesus said, if thou wilt be perfect, sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. But when he heard that he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. He did not do what Jesus required; but did not refrain from doing it because what Jesus had required was impracticable? If our opponents can prove this, they will prove at the same time that the requirement of Jesus was unjust, and exonerate the

man from blame, for how can any man do what is impracticable? Jesus told him then what he must do, not what he must believe, if he would enter into life, and would Jesus have told him what he must do to obtain his desire, if he had known at the same time that he could not do it in consequence of its impracticability? Is that like Jesus? think so who will of him, I will not.

See also Luke x. 25—37. Here a certain Lawyer from other motives tempted him by asking him the same question and to it in the 28 verse is given the same reply. See Luke xviii. 18—23. A certain ruler asked the same question and receives the same reply this might be the same as the one Matthew mentions, xix. 17. To whom Jesus said, but if thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments, now can it be believed that Jesus would have used such a form of words which are indicative of the possibility of his keeping the commandments so as to please God, if he had known at the same time that the thing was utterly impossible? Is not this in effect making him, to say: If thou wilt enter into life do that which is impossible for any human being to do? Would such a supposition be honourable to his wisdom or his character? Very far from it. When we say to a person, if you would be healthy, be temperate; if you would be wealthy be industrious; do we ever mean that it is impossible for a man to be temperate and industrious? no more did Jesus mean when he said to this man If thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments, that for him to keep them was impossible according to the meaning which he attached to his own expressions. Do our opponents think that Jesus was joking with this man, that he was playing off upon him a jesuitical trick of mental reservation, or that he was putting him upon the useless experiment of carrying a mountain, just to show him that he could not do it. Not wishing, Mr. Editor, to occupy at once more than a reasonable portion of your useful publication, I shall close this paper here and resume the subject in another, and I hope our opponents if they do not consider us as too insignificant, or unworthy their notice, will shew the public how they have met our arguments and confuted our reasonings.

J. R.

Hindley, April 10th, 1826.

INTELLIGENCE.

*Fourth Anniversary of the Unitarian Christian Congregation,
assembling in Moor Lane, Bolton.*

THE Fourth Anniversary of this Society, was held on Sunday and Monday, March 26th and 27th, at the Meeting House, in Moor Lane. The Rev. W. J. Bakewell of Chester, preached in the morning and afternoon of Sunday, and Rev. J. G. Robberds, of Manchester, on the evenings of Sunday and Monday; on which occasions, collections were made towards defraying the expense incurred by erecting the School Rooms and Vestries adjoining the Meeting House. On Monday, at one o'clock, the annual dinner took place, of which upwards of 120 persons partook. The Rev. W. Shepherd, of Gateacre, near Liverpool, officiated as Chairman, and Mr. Joshua Crook, as Vice-President. After the cloth was removed, the President observed, that those who were that day assembled, had been designated, by many able and eloquent characters, as a class of men wrapt in darkness. It was true that they had not had the benefit of *imposition* of hands by the Bishops, which he verily believed to be one of the grossest *impositions* that ever existed. The Aristocracy of the country had seized upon the riches of the Church, and aggrandized the members of their own families and connections; and ministers were thus forced upon the country, in contempt, as *Burke* would say, of the opinions and dispositions of their respective congregations. The choice of all ministers of Christianity should be invested in the people; and those who contributed, the smallest mite towards the spread of the Gospel, ought to have a vote in all the temporal concerns of the Church, of which they were members. The first toast he had to propose was,

"The true source of all power—The People."

The President then made a few observations upon the free discussion allowed in the Christian Church, until the Union took place between Church and State; which caused all the evils complained of by so many religious bodies. Thus, in consequence of this union, the Papal power had been carried to such an extent, that no one was allowed to promulgate his opinions, unless they were in conformity with the decision of Popes, Kings, Councils, and Priests. At the Reformation, though a mighty accession of religious liberty, and illumination of mind had occurred; yet this unnatural union being perpetuated, the successors of Popery in the emoluments of the Church, and the patronage of the State, cast an odium on free discussion. When the members of the Church of England were adducing arguments to oppose the Roman Catholic claims, the principle objection alleged against the latter was, that they deprecated discussion and the rights of conscience. But how did these very Churchmen act

at the Universities? They told the students to read the Bible, and to think for themselves; but when they came to be ordained, they were compelled to subscribe to the 39 articles, and were most emphatically and peremptorily exhorted, not to teach any other doctrines than what were contained in those articles. If they neglected this advice, expulsion from the bosom of the Church was the consequence. It reminded him of a certain connoisseur of paintings, who invited a friend to look at a fine picture, which he said was one of Raphael's; on his friend expressing some little hesitation, he said, "If you say that it is not Raphael's, I'll knock you down; nevertheless, let me have your candid opinion.—Every man ought to judge for himself in religious matters, and it was contrary to reason or justice that he should be persecuted for the avowal of any set of opinions.

"The unalienable birth right of man—unlimited freedom of discussion, and may no daring mortal, mounting the Throne of God, presume to direct the lighting of Heaven."

MR. F. B. WRIGHT, of Liverpool, then addressed the meeting. He contended in strong terms for the right, advantage, and importance of Free Discussion. Man was the image of God, and not that contemptible reptile, he was represented to be by the champions of Orthodoxy. He walked upright, and contemplated the Heavens. He was a creature possessed of reason and the power of acquiring extensive knowledge upon most subjects within the scope of his observation. But of what avail were the highest attainments of learning or philosophy, without the use of speech? The possession of the sublimest intellectual enjoyments would be of little avail without the power and will of speech to communicate them to others; and it was the possession of this invaluable gift, which made him superior to all the other created beings with which we are acquainted. When the hand of power was exercised to cripple this privilege the light of science was confined to the cells of Monks and Ascetics, and kept secret from the bulk of mankind; but it was at length so generally diffused, that nothing now could resist its progress. Where was the man that would now dare to say to one determined to inquire, and to discuss, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." That compact, which formerly united rulers and priests together, by which they were enabled to keep the great mass of their fellow creatures in ignorance and slavery, was now become as a rope of sand—liable to be shattered into fragments at the first breath of air. In all ages, however, men might be said to allow discussion to proceed to a certain extent. The Catholics formerly permitted their youth to study the Pagan Mythology, and to discuss its merits. But let them not question the authority of the Church; or the thunderbolts of the Vatican would be hurled against them, and precipitate them to perdition, as accursed and incorrigible heretics,

and objects of execration. But this limitation of discussion, was not confined to the Church of Rome ; for the Church of England showed herself to be of the same temper. Look at the persecutions to which the Puritans were subject. The Dissenters do not generally seem sensible of the trials and difficulties those great and good men had to encounter. The Church allowed discussion to a certain extent ; but it must be kept in proper bounds ; and in this instance too many dissenting churches are rigid conformists. Those who object to free discussion, are actuated by interested motives—*their craft is in danger*. They, therefore, sacrifice their genuine sentiments at the shrine of interest. The Speaker then alluded to Calvin and Servetus, who ought not to be mentioned on the same day with each other. Servetus carried discussion too far for the gloomy system of Calvin, who consequently made a *shining* example of him. He was happy to see, in the present day, the Friends of Free Discussion imitating the example of Christ, who was friendly to it, and who said “ why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.” What greater libel could there be on Christianity, than to say that it opposed Free Discussion. He deprecated the persecutions to which the impugners of Christianity had lately been exposed, and observed that all who differ from bigots in power would be subject to the same persecutions, if the temper of the age would permit. A French author (*Abbadie*) had said, that in religious matters, we must lay aside reason, and trust to faith, and lay all our knowledge at the foot of the cross. How are we to judge of the claims of any system of revelation, without reason—without discussing its merits ? Discussion elicits truth ; and it is our duty to examine into the evidences of Christianity. When man relinquishes, or is compelled to yield this right, he becomes a fit subject for the tyranny of the priest or the despot. But the time to restrain it is now past, and men are alive to its value. He, who makes use of God’s attribute, to punish those who disagree in opinion with himself, (did he believe in the existence of such a person) he should say, is an agent of the Devil. The time is fast approaching, when free discussion will be universal—when liberty will be triumphant—when our sable brethren will be placed on an equal footing with ours elves ; and when truth, like a river flowing from the throne of the Eternal, shall fertilize the earth,—shall bless and save the nations.

In proposing the next toast, the Chairman was happy to observe distinguished characters of every denomination coming forward to promote the general intellectual improvement of the people. Mechanics’ Institutions would be of utmost service in enlightening the minds of the great body of the people. The general thirst for knowledge and discussion, which now prevailed would be favorable to the cause of Unitarianism.

“ May every Society, instituted for the promotion of virtue flourish.”

The President would take the liberty of making an alteration in the next toast. When the list was first shown to him, he highly approved of it, and thought that no alteration for the better could easily be made ; but he would now, upon a second perusal, make an alteration, which he trusted would meet with the general approbation of the company. The original toast was,

“ May great men be honest, and honest men great ! ”

He should propose only the former clause, as he considered the latter part to be superfluous. However humble, poor, neglected, despised, or oppressed a man might be, if he were *honest*, he must be *great* ; whilst many, whom the world called great, could not be said to be honest.

“ May all Great Men be honest.”

The next toast (said the President) particularly referred to the congregation assembling at Moor Lane. He would take the liberty of saying a few words to them in the spirit of friendship. They were now likesheep without a shepherd. In the choice of a pastor, they should endeavour to be as unanimous as the circumstances of the case would admit ; though perfect unanimity was not to be expected. They should remember, that civil society cannot be carried on, without giving up some natural rights—or making some sacrifice of personal feeling ; but it did not require any sacrifice or compromise of moral or religious principle. He thought that they might concede much to each other. He strongly recommended them to be firmly united together,

“ Success to the Moor Lane Unitarian Christian Congregation ; may peace be within its walls, and unity, friendship, and brotherly love, ever distinguish its members.”

Mr. J. Bradshaw, in returning thanks on behalf of the congregation, gave an interesting detail of the gradual rise of the congregation, and the successive difficulties they had had to encounter ; but which, by perseverance they had conquered. They had raised £1,500 amongst themselves in three years. He concluded by advising his brother members to persevere, and they would still go on and prosper.

“ May our brethren have hearts that can feel, and hands willing to relieve.”

The Chairman remembered the sensation which Mr. Roscoe excited amongst the tories of Liverpool ; and one of the most clever men amongst them, attributed the great influence of the Dissenters to their superior education. The Unitarians in particular, were anxious to procure a liberal education for their children. The highest authorities look upon Dissenters as an important body—not from their wealth, but from their intellect.

"The progress of Education; and may man, bursting the chains with which custom and ignorance have enthralled him, be cheered by the pure light of knowledge, and exult in the sun beams of truth."

The Rev. Henry Green alluded to the difference between former and present times—The poor were no longer to be kept in ignorance.—Even in Russia, that seat of despotism, they received the benefits of education. Free discussion had made such progress, as to cause even Emperors to tremble at the force of public opinion. The shackles which antiquated custom had imposed upon us were to be for ever broken, and the light of truth was speedily to illuminate the whole world. In the course of his speech Mr. Green very happily introduced the lines of Sir William Jones, "What makes a state? &c"

"Our Female Friends—and though many daughters have acted virtuously—may they excel them all."

"The healths of the consistent advocates of uncorrupted Christianity, the Revds. J. G. Robberds and W. J. Bakewell, and thanks to them for their very valuable assistance on the present occasion."

The Rev. J. G. Robberds would leave his worthy friend (Mr. Bakewell) who had done all his work, to address them more at large, as he himself had still a part of his duty to perform, and must of course be brief on the present occasion. He then alluded to the state of the Moor Lane congregation and said they had not acquired the habits of long-established dissenting congregations.—*They had been left too soon*, and some of them had but very recently become members of a christian congregation of any description.—Their enemies were watching them to see how they would go on; and waiting with sanguine expectations of witnessing their downfall; but what a triumph awaited the members of Moor Lane, if they would only persevere and be united, and constrain their enemies to say, "See how these Christians love one another."

The Rev. W. J. Bakewell was glad to find so many still attended Moor Lane.—He wished them to be united in love to each other.—They should keep together in the same cause, and convince the world that they were influenced by the pure spirit of Christianity.

The President was glad to find that they had not been unmindful of the venerable bishop of Norwich. This worthy Prelate and bright ornament of the Church of England, had lately interfered in a cause, where one of the clergy of his diocese had manifested a spirit of bigotry. A Methodist wished to have her child buried, and the Dean refused her, because the child was not baptized according to the rites of the Established Church. It appears she had no other place in which to bury the child, besides the burying-ground belonging to the Church: and her friends made application to the Bishop, who wrote to the Dean in a manner that must have been far from agreeable to his feelings, and the poor woman met with no further obstacle to her wishes.

"The Bishop of Norwich ; may the Bench of Bishops follow his example, and preach peace not only in the Lord's House, but also in the House of Lords."

"The Ministers and Preachers of Unitarianism ; may they still continue diligent stewards—fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ;—and thanks to those who have assisted this Society in its progress, for their useful labours."

The Rev. W. J. Bakewell, of Chester, believed that Christ and his apostles taught the same doctrines which the present assembly professed and these doctrines were adhered to by the great body of Christians during the first three centuries, until the alliance between Church and State, when Christianity became corrupted—and even at the Reformation, it was far from being restored to its original purity. It was not until the time of Dr. Priestley and his illustrious coadjutors and successors, that the truth of the pure Gospel again beamed upon the world. Many of their congregations are small, but they are Unitarian, and formerly belonged to other denominations. There are many in the Church of England, who are Unitarians in principle ; and he felt shocked, that they could join with a Church, which told them they should perish everlastingly. We do not believe that any set of opinions are essential to salvation—but salvation was intimately connected with the practice of piety and virtue. He then painted, in strong terms, the horrible spirit of orthodoxy, in consigning all who could not conscientiously subscribe to certain dogmas, to everlasting torments. He wished to see a spirit of zeal diffused amongst them : and to see them knit together in a strong bond of union. Indifference in religion was the worst disease which could affect us,—It was worse than the canker worm. Keep up these Anniversaries of yours my friends, they have a powerful tendency to drive away indifference and to keep alive zeal. Let the Society go on and prosper, and choose a minister that would be faithful and zealous.

"The memory of Priestley, Lindsey, Wakefield, and Palmer—fragrant as Sharon's rose. The remembrance of their virtues and their deeds is sweet even in death."

"God's best gift and man's dearest right, civil and religious liberty."

Mr. E. Makin spoke at considerable length and adverted to the various species of oppression under which mankind had been subject—particularly the black slaves, and the Roman Catholics, and spoke of the obligations we were under to the latter in the earlier periods of our history. He concluded by wishing every religious denomination full, free and equal participation in their civil rights.

"May virtue direct our actions with respect to ourselves, justice to those with whom we deal, and mercy love and charity to all mankind."

"Prosperity to the Missionary Association, and our cordial good wishes for the success and happiness of the Rev. Abraham Bennett, who has undertaken the Office of permanent Missionary."

Rev. A. Bennett observed that much had been said and very

properly, concerning Unitarianism and Religious Liberty. Of all systems calculated to advance civil and religious liberty, he considered Unitarian Christianity to be the best. Knowledge and inquiry were daily increasing; and the art of reasoning was better understood than formerly; but if the old systems of Theology were to be supported, they would have a tendency to arrest the progress of improvement. Unitarianism was the simple truth of the scriptures, it represented God as our parent, our father; and it inspired us with confidence to appeal to him, not only as our Creator, but as an all benevolent parent; whose power and goodness are united and constantly exerted for the benefit of all his people. View what is called Calvinism, and God appears inexorable; for by its doctrines, a few only are saved; whilst the majority are damned. Arminianism at first sight appears more mild and generous; but by that system as many of God's creatures are lost in going into port, as by Calvinism are excluded from embarking in the vessel. In disseminating Unitarianism, he considered he was doing good for time and for eternity. He was anxious that Unitarianism should prevail; as it would increase the happiness of his fellow creatures, by inspiring them with confidence and destroying every doubt and fear respecting their eternal welfare. This was the simple unadulterated religion preached by the Son of man; and nothing was wanting but unanimity and zeal amongst its professors, to ensure its success.

"Success to the labors of those who in season and out of season on every suitable occasion preach the Gospel to the poor."

Rev. Mr. Beard, from Manchester, commenced by regretting that domestic circumstances had prevented him from fulfilling an engagement, he had made some time ago, to preach in Bolton, but he pledged himself to have that pleasure on the first opportunity. He declared himself to be no party man, for wherever Unitarianism was to be preached he was always ready to exert himself. He dwelt with energy upon the necessity of preaching those doctrines to the poor; said some persons had doubted their adaptation to the people; but by the term people, he understood the poor, for unfortunately the majority of the people were very poor, and he could adduce instances where it had been efficacious amongst them, and proved a spring of living water. He had known many persons who had embraced Unitarianism by reading the Bible only, without the assistance of any other book or commentary. In Guernsey, a number of persons of various creeds, who were unable to reconcile the conflicting sentiments of different sectarian preachers on the Island, determined to inquire candidly into the subject for themselves, and after a laborious and impartial research in the Scriptures, they arrived at Unitarianism; but they were not aware then, that their tenets were distinguished by that name, until some of them came into England, and associated with men professing the same opinions

as themselves. This he considered a proof that Unitarianism is deducible from revelation alone. He had seen the efficacy of preaching to the poor, at York, where he had had the pleasure of witnessing the erection of a temple for the worship of the one true God. The present assembly he believed to be Unitarians in heart and spirit, and if they found it adapted to their wants and circumstances, they were bound as men and citizens to make it known, for the general good of their fellow creatures. It were better for Christianity to be diffused in its corrupt state, rather than not be diffused at all; for it had never been so far corrupted, as to lose all its efficacy and virtue. Infidelity at present was spreading most rapidly; works formerly confined to the upper classes of society, were now within the reach of the poor; and a joint stock company had been formed for the dissemination of infidel works, which had already produced its fruits. With those who are unable to discriminate the fallacies of infidelity, they obtain a reception, and commence a work of demoralization. If Unitarians, then, have the means, let them strain every nerve to check this evil, and spread the goodness of their own tenets. He would condemn no man's sentiments, for let them be what they may, if embraced conscientiously, he trusted he would be acknowledged of God. He was secretary to a society for reading, and the pleasure which he constantly derived by witnessing the amity that exists among its members for the promotion of knowledge and Unitarian sentiments was beyond his description.—Unitarianism had a tendency to liberalize mankind, and he concluded by a powerful exhortation to promote its extension.

The Vice-President then gave—"The man who through good and through evil report, has dared to be at his post—the consistent advocate of truth—the philanthropist and scholar, whose exertions have been constant in the cause of the great family of man—our worthy *Chairman*, the Rev. W. Shepherd." It is impossible to describe the enthusiasm with which this toast was received.

The Rev. W. Shepherd attributed the compliments which they paid him, more to their partiality, than to any merit on his part, and he sincerely thanked them for their warm expressions of kindness and approbation. He trusted he might say without vanity, that whenever civil and religious liberty had been called into question, he was found at his post. He was probably indebted to incidents which had occurred to him in early life, for the sentiments he now held, and for the conduct he had pursued. When a boy, he was sent to a school, where he was the only Dissenter amongst the scholars, and his uncle was the only man in the place who was opposed to the American war. Consequently he (Mr. Shepherd) was abused and scouted by all his school-fellows as a Presbyterian rebel. He was glad of it; for it made him firm and resolute in the cause of truth; and it led

him to inquire early, and caused him to embrace the opinions he now professed. He was not sorry for what he done; for he had lived to see in this kingdom and the world at large—men whom it was an honour to resemble, do many things which he himself had advocated from a child. He had seen the United States of America assert their liberty, and establish a Republican Government; he had seen liberty transplanted from that country into France, which she now enjoyed, since the Revolution, under a limited monarchy, instead of a despotic Government. He had seen the blacks in St. Domingo obtain their manumission; and whatever might be said in the House of Commons by Messrs. Buxton, Wilberforce, or Canning, *he looked to St. Domingo as the cloud whence the lightning shall blast and annihilate slavery and oppression!* He had seen the South American States break the chains of their oppressors, and assert the rights of free-born men. In England, a great revolution had taken place in the minds of men since 1792 and 3. At that time it was not safe for a man of liberal sentiments to walk the streets. He had been *pelted in the Streets of Bolton, as a Presbyterian and a Jacobin*; but now he could walk in perfect safety, and the improvement in liberal principles was so great, that if a Public Meeting were called in that Town, upon a subject of civil or religious liberty, he believed the majority would be found in its favour. Manchester was also much improved. They had lately a Petition for Parliamentary Reform, which some years since, would have been thought to have threatened the overthrow of Church and State. Many persons, in consequence of publicly maintaining their opinions, had on different occasions, suffered severely in their lives and property. He was happy, however, to say of himself, that, excepting the pelting in the streets of the good town of Bolton, he had suffered no personal inconvenience. He would recommend all, at their outset in life, to acquire decision of character, and strength of principle; for when their opponents saw them firm and undaunted, they would be less inclined to meddle with them. They would soon learn to their cost, that if they struck hard, they would be struck hard in return. In his own neighborhood, he had the pleasure of living upon good terms with his opponents. He was very sanguine in the cause for which they then met; and whilst his strength remained, his exertions should not cease. He, however, found his strength gradually declining; but contrary to the experience of many, with him it revived at the proceedings of such meetings as the present. It was a source of continual pleasure for him to know, that when his exertions should be withdrawn by the resistless hand of time, his place would be supplied by persons better calculated than himself to advance the great cause. Mr. Shepherd concluded by saying, that he was compelled to leave the Chair immediately, as his necessary avocations called him away from the Town.

Mr. Robberds then took the Chair, and observed, that he considered himself as a usurper ; as he knew not whether the right of election was invested in the assembly, or the succession to the Chair despotic. If the former were the case, he would resign ; if the latter, it was legitimate ; but contrary to the rules of legitimacy, he would give ear to the people. They were, at present a flock without a *Shepherd*, for the *Shepherd* had just left them ; but if they would accept of his services, he would endeavour to keep them from wandering astray like lost sheep. He then proposed.

"The health of our truly Reverend Friend, Richard Wright, who has done so much to forward the common cause of Unitarianism, as Missionary to the London Association."

Mr. F. B. Wright returned thanks on behalf of his brother.

"Prosperity to Moor Lane Sunday Schools, and thanks to the superintendants and teachers, for their exertions ; and may the cause of Education flourish throughout the world."

Mr. P. Heywood replied.

"Our Christian brethren of every denomination, in this town and neighbourhood ; may they diligently investigate every religious subject, and honestly follow the conviction of their own minds."

Mr. Isaac Barrow replied in a neat speech, in which he said Christianity was a system of love, but which could not be said to be generally adopted, whilst men persecuted their brethren for difference of opinion.

A hymn was then sung, and a prayer delivered, and the assembly retired to meet again at the Moor Lane Chapel.

On Tuesday, about 100 of the Sunday School scholars, with their teachers, sat down to dinner. When the cloth was removed, the President, the Rev. Robert Cree of Preston proposed the following sentiment, which he prefaced with a few observations, "Success to the cause of the general Education of the Poor."

The children were then addressed by Mr. Makin, Mr. Finch, of Liverpool, and Mr. Heywood the superintendant ; in the course of which, the object and tendency of Sunday Schools were dwelt upon, and the children exhorted to pursue that course of life most acceptable to their Creator, by emulating every virtuous action ; and by being kind and charitable to each other, and consistent in their conduct as rational creatures. Mr. Cree eulogized, in high terms, Mechanics' institutions, and proposed a toast, wishing them success. After which, a hymn was sung, a benediction given by the Chairman, and the Meeting broke up.

*** The above report is taken from the Bolton Chronicle, with a few slight alterations made by a friend, who was present at the meeting.

Somerset, Gloucester, and Wilts. Unitarian Missionary Association.

The third half-yearly general meeting of this Association was held on Friday March 24th at Frenchay, near Bristol, and was attended by friends from Bristol, Bath, Trowbridge, Oakill, Thornbury, Calne, and Taunton. The Scriptures were read, and the prayer offered up by the Rev. R. Wright; and the solemnity, ardour, and impressiveness, with which he performed this very important part of the religious service, commanded the fixed attention of the congregation, and evidently produced a considerable effect. The Rev. Matthew Harding afterwards delivered in a very able manner, a judicious, argumentative, and interesting discourse from 2 Cor. xiii. 9, "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." The preacher first instituted the inquiry, What is Christian truth? This question he answered negatively and then affirmatively. In prosecuting this part of his subject, Mr. H. adduced reasons why the doctrine of the trinity, the two natures of Christ, the personality of the Holy Spirit, satisfaction for sin, and the endless duration of future punishments, cannot;—and why the Unity, Supremacy, and exclusive Deity of the Father, the subordination of Christ, and the free unpurchased mercy of God, must be, Christian truths. This was succeeded by very suitable observations upon the power of truth,—the certainty of its final triumph, and the folly of attempting to impede its progress. The whole was closed with some most appropriate remarks upon the advantages of endeavouring to accelerate the progress of Christian truth, and the necessity imposed upon those who believe Unitarianism to be the "truth as it is in Jesus" to unite zealously to disseminate these doctrines among mankind. The discourse was listened to with deep attention by a numerous and respectable assembly, and there is good reason to hope that the Minister's labours will prove not to have been in vain. The hymns were read by the Rev. H. Clarke, the pastor of the Congregation, and the singing was ably conducted; the Choirs of the Bristol and Bath Unitarian Societies having kindly volunteered their assistance on this occasion.

At the close of the religious service S. Hobbs, Esq. was called to the Chair, and the Secretary read the Committee's report of their proceedings for the last half year. After which the Members and Friends of the Association repaired to the Bell Inn, Stapleton, and sat down, upwards of sixty of both sexes to an economical dinner. On the removal of the cloth the three choirs performed in admirable style the same hymn and tune sung at Marshfield on a similar occasion.* The Rev. M. Harding who

* As this mode of returning thanks after dinner forms a more than pleasing part of the day's proceedings it is recommended for adoption in as many

filled the chair, then proceeded to propose several apposite sentiments as toasts: These drew forth remarks from Messrs. Wright, Clarke, Browne, Hyde, &c. The company continued together enjoying the pure pleasures derived from such social religious meetings until six o'clock, when they separated highly, gratified, and, there is good reason for believing, permanently benefited by the pleasing, instructive, and mutually encouraging proceedings of a day which each individual evidently experienced to be really a GOOD FRIDAY.

H. C.

Methodist Unitarians.

The annual meeting of the Unitarian congregations of Rochdale, Newchurch in Rossendale, Todmorden, Padiham, &c. will be held this year in Rochdale on Friday in Whitsuntide week. The Rev. N. Jones, of Todmorden, and the Rev. J. Beard, of Green Gate, Salford; will preach on the occasion. Services will commence at Ten o'clock in the forenoon and at Six in the Evening.

* * There will be a Dinner provided for the Friends of the association, on a very cheap plan.

Unitarianism in America.

A Second Temple dedicated to the Worship of the One and Only God, has been opened in Northampton, U. S. In our Extracts from American Publications, we have given the concluding address of Mr. Ware on the occasion.

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

The following Extract is from a Sermon delivered by the Rev. Henry Ware, Jun. at the Dedication of the Second Congregational Church in Northampton, U. S. N. America, December 7th. 1825.

BRETHREN of this Christian Society; the place of your future solemnities you have now fully given up to the purposes for which you designed it. May God accept your offering, and record his name here! Beneath his smiles you have labored, and brought your work to a conclusion; not indeed with uninterrupted pros-

Associations as are able so to do—The Hymn on this occasion was Fawcett's "Praise to thee, thou great Creator, &c." (Kippis Col. 284.) Tune Calcutta.

* * * If any person wish for a copy of the Hymn, with the Tune, as arranged for this occasion, the Editor can procure it.

perity; for He, who chastens every son whom he receives, and makes our whole lot a state of trial, has been pleased to cast a cloud over you. But this you have used, we trust, as the religious man uses all trials—to strengthen, not to shake your faith, to confirm your adherence to duty, not to dishearten you. And now, with brightening prospects and undiminished zeal toward God, you present yourselves at his altar and devote to him the fruit of your toils. We rejoice to have come up with you, and to aid you in the pious duty. We sympathize with you in the mingled feelings of the occasion. Our hearts have risen with yours on the notes of the first anthem which has ascended from within these walls, and on the incense of the first prayer which has gone up to the father of spirits. We unite with you in the solicitudes and hopes which swell your breasts, and in the deep interest with which you regard your future religious temple, and its consequences on your character and peace.

There is a feeling connected with the place of worship, which none can understand but the devout mind which has experienced it. It is like the fire-side home, the centre of many emotions and interests, hallowed by a thousand tender associations and dear recollections, of which he who has never partaken them can know nothing. Joys are there, with which the stranger does not intermeddle, and sometimes, alas, a bitterness is there, which the heart only knows. To you, therefore, this simple house where you are to worship, is an object of as deep interest and importance, as to the returning Jews was the magnificent temple they were rebuilding. It is not reared indeed beneath the inspection of a prophet, nor has its progress been anxiously watched by all the tribes in the land. But the affections of many Christian hearts have been turned to it, and are seeking here the blessings of the Lord of heaven. You do not consecrate it, as that ancient temple, in pomp and sacrifice and splendour—here is no cloud of rolling incense, no hecatombs streaming blood, no thick darkness to manifest the glory of Jehovah. But humble as it may be, it is yet the house of God and the gate of heaven—in simpler majesty devoted to a simpler faith. It is to be the sabbath-home of many believing and devoted hearts, who will seek and find their father here. It is the consecrated place where

the communion of your Saviour's love is to fill you with peace and hope, and the pure water of sprinkling to welcome your offspring to the covenant of the Lord. It is the holy school of religious teaching, where your children are to attain wisdom and strength before they go out into the perilous highway of life. It is the spot of sacred repose, to which you look for refreshment from the wearisome bustle of the world, and where you expect to find open for you the only fountain of sufficient solace and support amid the sorrows and trials of earth ; where strength shall be gained for temptation, and peace imparted to the penitent, and spiritual light pervade and gladden the waiting soul. Until the veil which now separates this outer court from the holy of holies shall be withdrawn, and your spirits be ushered into the mansions of eternal light, to enjoy the unclouded presence of God, and worship in the temple not made with hands.

Curious Illustration of Gen. i. 26.

SIR,

In a work entitled " Scripture Characters, or a practical improvement of the principal histories in the Old and New Testament, by Thomas Robinson M. A. vicar of St. Mary's Leicester and late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge ;—is the following curious illustration of the above passage of Scripture " Man was designed to be His Vicegerent, or representative upon earth : and to mark the dignity and excellence of this creature, above the rest, the Lord God proceeded, with a peculiar solemnity, to his creation. Other animals had been produced at once by the word of the Lord ; but now, as if upon a matter of singular importance, A COUNCIL IS HELD AMONG THE PERSONS OF THE GODHEAD, TO COMPLETE THE GRAND WORK, AND TO FORM MAN UPON EARTH. God said, " Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," &c.—(Vol. i. p. 6.) Really Mr. Editor, though man is " fearfully and wonderfully made," I did not know that he was beyond the skill of that great being who made the heavens, the earth, and *all* that is therein : grant that he was beyond the skill of Omnipotence, how is it that he was made such a very imperfect creature as to trespass in so short a time after his creation ?

Your readers will, no doubt, Sir, be as surprised as I am that a Divine at the close of the 18th century—a Fellow of one of our Universities, who could publish a work, in other respects so very instructive and useful, could insert or even imagine such unworthy and degrading notions of that Being who has again

and again declared himself to be without a rival, and with whom alone "all things are possible."—

H. E. H.

Bath, April 10th, 1826,

CHARGES AGAINST THE UNITARIANS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

In the New Baptist Magazine, published, April, 1826, is the following, under the head, "*Persecutions at Geneva.*"

"We are sorry to find that the opposition of the Socinian body, comprising the venerable company of the Pastors at Geneva towards the truth is greatly on the increase Messrs. Malan, Empezlas, Glier, Boet, &c. are the objects of the most disgraceful persecution, and this from a body who make such loud pretensions to the love of liberty."

I request you will give this a place in your Reflector, and that some of your Correspondents will be able to refute the charge, as satisfactorily as Mr. Bakewell has those which have been propagated through the medium of Dr. Pye Smith.

Yours, truly,

VINDEX.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

In the Cottage Magazine for March, 1826 is the following Letter, headed "*Persecution by Socinians.*"

Switzerland, G.—March 2nd, 1825.

"You know, perhaps that one of our brethren of N—, has just been condemned, for the sole fact of having the Lord's supper celebrated in his house, (though by an ordained minister,) to ten years' banishment, with the expences. He was led bound with cords, into the public square, and compelled to hear his sentence on his kness in the snow."

"A. B."

And who is A. B. will he, or will the Editor of the Cottage Magazine, give the world his name, that we may know what credit is due to such a charge? Waiting for further information I remain,

INDAGATOR.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

OF WAR.

IN varied life's eventful span
 Is there not woe enough for man?
 Does fell disease, with all its train
 Find him insensible to pain?
 Can famine's pale and haggard face
 Leave on his callous heart a trace?
 Alas, his frigid, reckless mind
 Feeds on the ills of human-kind;
 And all the forms which mis'ry bears,
 Fail in the sum of mortal cares,
 Save one alone, which from afar
 Breathes rage and death, and that is WAR.
 War, horrid pest! the baneful flood,
 Which rolls its deep-dy'd seas of blood;
 And drenches earth through ev'ry pore
 With reeking tides of human gore.

Detested art! the hateful source
 Whence flows the ill of life's sad course;
 Light would have fall'n the show'r of woe,
 Soft as descends the flaky snow,
 And earth had smil'd, with plenty blest;
 Hadst thou not rais'd thy bloody crest.

Whence comes this frightful scourge of man?
 Have demons drawn the hideous plan?
 And pencil'd out with gall and fire
 This symbol of infernal ire.
 Ask the high-thron'd despotic knave
 Who proudly calls his fellow, slave;
 Who sits with pow'r and splendour crown'd
 While bending minions stoop around:
 Who sends his lordly mandate forth
 And war is heard from south to north;
 In marble hall, on gilded throne,
 The die is cast, and millions groan.

Now hostile myriads scour the plain,
 And murder, lust, and rapine reign;
 Ere yet the dreadful shock is known
 The seeds of death are thickly sown.
 Like hungry locusts keen for prey,
 The adverse legions urge their way,

And swift, like flashing light'ning, sweep
 From fertile vales the peaceful sheep,
 And lowing herds unnumber'd feel
 The whistling ball, or deadly steel.
 Nor from this fiend-like scourge escape
 The golden field and clust'ring grape,
 Which smiling deck the cheerful land,
 The choicest gifts of bounty's hand.
 Like mountain torrents, deep and strong
 That rush with roaring voice along,
 And trees and rocks, in foaming haste,
 Compel to swim the wat'ry waste ;
 So onward press the murd'rous crew,
 Famine and fire their steps pursue ;
 By day their odious route is trac'd
 In ruin'd fields, and woods effac'd ;
 And burning to wns, with dismal light
 Mark in dread spires the track by night.

Hark ! the low mutt'ring thunder growls,
 And battle's redd'ning visage scowls ;
 The hostile squadrons now draw near,
 And death is pois'd on ev'ry spear :
 The roaring cannon rends the sky
 And loud proclaims the carnage nigh.
 Still nearer yet the tempest low'rs,
 And iron hail incessant show'rs ;
 While nitrous clouds obscure the sun
 As earth her great career had run.
 Behold insatiate murder spread
 Wide o'er the plain its heaps of dead,
 And groaning thousands, mad with pain,
 Cry loud for aid, but cry in vain ;
 'Mid trampling hoofs, a horrid bed,
 The dying soldier droops his head.
 On him is fix'd no tearful eye,
 No mother hears his last-drawn sigh,
 Nor tender wife, with heart of woe,
 Perceives his last convulsive throes.
 What pangs the gasping suff'rer feels !
 While quick the ebbing current steals ;
 When long-lost home his mind pourtrays
 And wafts him back to happy days ;
 To days of innocence and truth,
 Of cheerful hope, and gladsome youth :

More livid grow his care-worn cheeks,
 His sick'ning heart with anguish breaks,
 And murm'ring curses, low and long,
 Drop faintly from his dying tongue.

And who are these ; to slaughter bred ?
 Like victims to the altar led ;
 Come they from Afric's burning shores,
 Where loud the forest tyrant roars,
 Where man in mental darkness sleeps,
 And in the chains of bondage creeps ;
 Or come they fierce from Scythia's sand,
 With savage heart, and deathly hand,
 With stupid souls, to brutes allied,
 Scarce wiser than the beasts they ride ?
 No ; polish'd Europe's sons behold !
 A servile race, who kill for gold ;
 Yet loudly boast their christian fame,
 Christian in nothing but the name.

T.

Liverpool, April 18th, 1826.

REFLECTIONS

*On the Revival of the Unitarian Cause
 at Marshfield, Gloucestershire.*

Who hath not seen the morning mist
 Disperse before the orb of day ;
 Or often paus'd awhile to list,
 While countless tribes their homage
 pay ?

Who hath not felt a thrilling charm
 When waken'd nature thus revives,
 Or felt the truth his bosom warm ;—
 In all we see, our Maker lives ?

So do the clouds of error melt,
 And vanish from our mental sight ;—
 And thus the genial warmth is felt
 Of freedom's pure and welcome light !
 This sheds around delightful gleams ;
 Like Eden's star through midnight
 gloom :—

And thus will truth's enlightening
 beams

Bid hope and joy and virtue bloom !

Though all around be drear and dark ;
 With scarce one ray of light between,
 Yet still a glimmering, latent spark
 Of hope is left to cheer the scene :—
 Inspiring zeal that fans the flame
 Of pure Religion's sacred fire,
 Worthy alone that honour'd name
 To whom our warmest hopes aspire.

Ye who have lived through years of pain
 And seen your best friends fall around ;
 Tis surely sweet to view again
 The social band on holy ground !
 Join'd by one hope, one faith, ye meet ;
 To one great God, your hymns ye raise,
 There offer up the incense sweet
 Of fervent prayer, and ardent praise !

Ah look behind ye ! pause awhile
 On those dark days for ever fled ;
 And view them as the funeral pile
 Of error's crumbling pyramid !
 And if o'er yon time-honour'd grave,
 Ye muse on one who sleeps beneath ;
 Religion's laurel there may wave ;
 And twine round many a sacred
 wreath.

But look before ye ! prospects bright
 On every side will meet your view ;
 And streams of pure and radiant light,
 The path of truth will plainly shew.
 Aye, look before ye ! many a field
 Awaits the hand of culture there,
 These shall an ample harvest yield,
 And well reward the labourer's care.

And why was man created, why
 Was reason's noblest influence given,
 To lift our loftiest thoughts on high
 And raise our hearts best hopes to
 heaven ?

"To well improve the talent here !"
 This is the destin'd task assign'd ;
 And this fulfilled,—a happier sphere
 Awaits the pure and humble mind !

Heniton.

J. M.

LINES

*Addressed to a Friend on the loss of a
 Brother.*

I need not be told how heart-rending it is
 To take the last gaze on the form of a
 friend ;
 And fain now the wild harp of grief would
 I seize,
 To pour forth a lay that would sympathy
 lend.

I need not be told what a desolate chill
 Must steal o'er the heart when the spirit
 has fled

But well do I know ye can bow to *His* will,
Who hath number'd thy brother along
with the dead.

Yet say do ye sorrow as those without hope?
Doth no sunbeam of promise enliven the
gloom?

Is there only for grief and for misery scope,
And nought that will brighten the slum-
berer's tomb?

O yes! There is left ye the heart-cheering
truth,
That again ye shall meet in those regions
sublime:—

Where the freed spirit glowing in unfading
youth,
Will triumph o'er all the rude efforts of
Time!

Then mourn not my friend, for he resteth
in peace;
And is free from the griefs that awaited
him here,
The sleep of the just who are blessed is his;
Till the morn when he wakes in a happier
sphere.

Yes! Beneath the green sod where his
ashes repose
The world's ceaseless cares are for ever at
rest;
He needs not, he feels not the bitterest woes
With which the frail mortals of earth
are distressed.

Then wipe from your eyelids the sorrowing
tear,
And remember before you a brighter life
lies;
Where the ills that embitter the pure
spirit here,
May enhance its enjoyment in happier
skies!

Honiton.

J. M.

RESIGNATION.

From an American Publication.

Oh! let my trembling heart be still,
While darkness veils this mortal eye
And wait thy will, thy holy will,
Wrapt yet in fears and mystery:
I cannot, Lord thy purpose see?
But all is well—since ruled by Thee.

When mounted on thy clouded car,
Thou send'st thy darker spirits down,
I can discern thy light afar,
Thy light sweet beaming thro' thy frown,
And should I faint a moment—then—
I'll think of thee and smile again.

So trusting in thy love I tread
The narrow path of duty on—
What tho' some cherished joys are fled?
What tho' some flattering dreams are gone?
Yet purer, brighter joys remain,
Why should my spirit then complain?

EPIGRAM.

At the late Anniversary of the Unitarian Congregation, Loor Lane, Bolton, the worthy Chairman, the Rev. W. Shepherd, of Gateacre, in the course of the Meeting, remarked, that the Congregation, being without a Minister, "were as sheep without a Shepherd;" which gave rise to the following Epigram, by a person who is NO POET.

At the head of a flock did a Shepherd preside
Who said they were then as sheep without any guide
He must sure have been absent, or fallen asleep,
Or from a Shepherd have been transform'd to a Sheep.

QUERIES.

X. will be obliged to any one who will inform him whether the prophecies relating to the future prosperity of the Jews, refer to their restoration to the land of their forefathers, or will be accomplished by their embracing Christianity in common with the people of the countries in which they may sojourn?

Was Jesus of Nazareth born God, or did he become so at any subsequent period of his life; or has he been raised to the rank of Deity since his resurrection from the dead?

OMEGA.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Our readers will perceive that we have given an extra Half Sheet in this Number. Omicron shall have a place in our next—Y. is received.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 18. NEW SERIES.

Price 4½d.

JUNE 1, 1826.

THE EARLY BRITISH CHURCH.

To Charles Butler, Esq. Lincoln's Inn.

SIR,

THOUGH I am neither a Roman Catholic, nor the son of a Roman Catholic, yet I have read your "Book of the Roman Catholic Church" with very considerable pleasure. I have also perused Dr. Southey's "Book of the Church," but its contents rather disgusted than pleased me, and caused me to lament that a gentleman of his talents and erudition should endeavour to praise his church (I hope *ignorantly*) at the expence of truth and decency. It is, however, natural that Dr. Southey should consider his church as a mirror of excellence, because he is an Episcopalian, and that you should view your church as pure both in doctrine and discipline, because you are a Roman Catholic. This predeliction for your respective churches is, in several respects, a praise-worthy feeling; and it is one which is more or less manifested by all professing christians, though the churches with which they are connected differ materially from each other, both in doctrine and in discipline. We ought not, however, to quarrel with each other on this account, nor attempt to deprive each other of our civil rights, because I feel firmly persuaded that there are excellent characters in all churches, even the most corrupt and heretical; and that at the last day, if Jesus Christ is to be credited, we are to be rewarded or punished not according to our modes of faith, but according to our actions.

Impressed with the accuracy of this statement, I respectfully request your attention to the following observations. They have been drawn up in consequence of some allusions of yours in your "Book of the Roman Chatholic Church," which appear to me

either doubtful or imperfect. I flatter myself that they may be of service to you in the next edition of your work : at any rate, they have been penned with a good intention.

You say, Letter ii. p. 20. second edition. "It is probable, that christianity was disseminated over parts of England during the apostolic age. This was universally believed by our ancestors ; some have called it *the first of the three conversions of England to christianity.*" Now, Sir, this is more than probable : it is an historic fact well attested. You well know that the Silurian prince Caradog, the Caractacus of the Romans, opposed the arms of Rome, in an arduous, though unequal struggle, for the space of nine years. He was subsequently betrayed by Boadicea, queen of the Iceni, (some erroneously say, Carlismandua queen of the Brigantes,) and sent prisoner to Rome. His father Brân and his family accompanied him there, and were for some time detained as hostages. During his residence in Rome, Brân became acquainted with the christians, and was converted to christianity. After residing in Rome for the space of seven years, he was permitted with his family to return to Britain, and immediately began to preach the gospel (not in England as you affirm,) but in Siluria, his own principality. On this account, Brân and his family are ranked with those of Cynedda Wledig and Brychain, as one of the three holy families of Britain. The triad in which this statement is made, is so curious that I am sure you will not be offended with the following translation of it.—"The three holy families of the Isle of Britain : The family of Brân the blessed, son of Llyr Llediaith ; that is to say, this Brân was the first who brought the faith in Christ to this Island from Rome, where he was prisoner through the treachery of Boadicea, daughter of Mandubratius, son of Lludd. The second was the family of Cynedda Wledig, who first gave land and privilege to God and the saints in the Isle of Britain. The third was Brychain Brycheiniawg who brought up his children and grandchildren in learning and virtue, that they might be able to show the faith in Christ to the nation of the Welsh, where they were without faith."* Now, Brân was taken to Rome as a prisoner with his son Caractacus and family in A. D. 52 ; he remained

(*) Arch. of Wales, vol. ii. p. 61, Triad 18.

seven years in Rome ; consequently he returned to Britain in A. D. 59 or nearly so : he died about the year 80.† With these dates before us, we may conclude that this prince promulgated the gospel amongst his countrymen during a period of twenty years. I am not ignorant of the traditions existing respecting Joseph of Arimathea, St. Paul, St. James and others ; but these are only traditions, whilst on the other side I present positive proof, drawn from the authentic records of the Britons, that the gospel was first preached in Britain about the year 59 by a Briton, the venerable prince of Siluria.

The efforts, however, of Brân were confined to his native district, and it is highly probable, from a consideration of many circumstances, too numerous to mention in this letter, that his success, in the conversion of his countrymen to Christianity, was not very great. Accordingly when Lleirwg or Lucius ascended the throne of Siluria, he formed the generous design of diffusing christianity more generally over his dominions. With reference to this event, I shall quote your own words.

“We are informed by the venerable Bede, and by several of our early historians, that, about the one hundred and seventeenth year of the christian era, pope Eleutherius, on the application of Lucius a British prince, the third in descent from Caractacus, and particularly favoured by the Romans, commisioned two clergymen, Fugatius and Damianus, to preach the gospel to the Britons. This has been called *the second of the three conversions of Britain* to Christianity. Doctor Heylin asserts, that Lucius procured archiepiscopal sees to be erected at York, Caerleon upon Usk, and London, for the northern, southern, and western parts of England ; and Suffragan bishops to be assigned to each.” Letter ii. p. 20., second edition.

This passage contains some important statements, where truth and error are so curiously blended, that it will be necessary to examine it attentively, in order that we may sift the wheat from the chaff. I agree with you, Sir, that Lucius did apply to pope

(†) Camb. Biog. pp. 26, 27.

Eleutherius about the year 180 (not 117 as you affirm) for ministers to instruct his subjects more fully in the christian faith. He made this application to the Bishop of Rome, because his ancestor Brân had been instructed there in the truths of the gospel, and because Rome was, at that time, considered the grand centre of civilization and information. (2) Pope Eleutherius sent *four* (not *two* as you have stated) missionaries into Britain at the request of Lucius.* Their British names were Dyvan, Elvan, Fagan, and Medwy. Dyvan fixed his residence at Merthyr Dyvan in Glamorganshire, where he suffered martyrdom, and has ever been considered by the British church, as the first religious martyr in Britain. Elvan settled at Glastonbury in Somersetshire; Fagan at Llan St. Fagan, Medwy at Llanvedwy both of which places are in Glamorganshire. Fagan seems to have been a man of great energy, and the following aphorism of his is so pregnant with meaning as to merit the attention both of the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of England. —“Lle mae Duw yn ddistaw, ni ddylai dyn levaru.” *i. e.* *Where God is silent, man ought not to speak.* (3) I deny the truth of Dr. Heylin's statement, which you seem to approve of, that Lucius “procured archiepiscopal sees to be erected at York, Caerleon upon Usk, and London . . . and suffragan bishops to be assigned to each.” Can any one in his senses suppose that a petty prince of Siluria, towards the close of the second century of the christian era, had power and influence sufficient to do such things? Were not the Romans, at the period in question, in full possession of Britannia Prima and Maxima Cæsarensis? Would they, as an idolatrous nation and as opposers of the christian religion, as appears by their cruel conduct towards the christians in Britain and elsewhere, permit the establishment of archiepiscopal sees and the appointment of suffragan bishops at such important stations as York and London? The thing is impossible. Where are your proofs for these assertions? The phrases “archiepiscopal sees” and “suffragan bishops” appear very grateful as strokes of oratory, but when you apply them to the British church towards the middle or even the close of the second century, you really excite my risibilities. Even suppos-

(*) Vide Camb. Biog. pp. 93, 112, 122, 243

ing that Lucius, in his great zeal, did send missionaries to York or London, and that these virtuous men did make a few converts to christianity in these places, is it rational to conclude that York and London immediately became archiepiscopal sees, and that these missionaries were constituted suffragan bishops? A few pious men, with hardly the necessities of life for their support, and surrounded by numerous and powerful enemies, were suffragan bishops! And the obscure places they preached in, probably wattling cottages plaistered with mud and covered with thatch, were archiepiscopal sees! Really, Sir, this is too much even for credulity itself. Either, therefore, the phrases in question were used with acceptations very different from those which they have at present, both among Catholics and Episcopalians, or the statement of Dr. Heylin, whom you seem to credit, is not true. But leaving this; the sees of York and London were founded long after the death of Lucius; that of York was founded by the Emperor Constantine; that of London by the Emperor Maximus; whilst Caerleon upon Usk, and several others, are of a more recent date. (*)

(4.) Having shown what Lucius did not, I will now state what he really did. He built the church of Llandav "under national privilege, right, and protection," and which was the first christian church in Britain. † On this account he was ranked with Brân and Cadwaladr, as one of the three blessed princes of the Isle of Britain, as appears by the following triad. "The three blessed princes of the Isle of Britain: Brân the blessed, son of Llyr, Llediaith who first brought the faith in Christ to the nation of the Welsh from Rome, where he was seven years a hostage for his son Caradog whom the Romans took prisoner after he was betrayed through the enticement, deceit and plotting of Boadicea. Second, Lleirwg (Lucius) son of Coel, son of St. Cyllin also called Lleuver the Great, who built the first church in Llandav, which was the first in the Isle of Britain, and who gave the privilege of the country and tribe, with civil and ecclesiastical rights to those who professed the faith in Christ. The third was Cadwaladr the Blessed, who gave protection within his land,

(*) Arch. of Wales, vol. ii. p. 68, Triad 62.

(†) Vide Camb. Biog. pp. 214, 215.

and within all his possessions, to the christians who fled from the infidel and lawless Saxons that wished to murder them." (*) It is worthy of remark that though Llandav was the first church erected in Britain, yet as a bishop's see it is now the poorest.

You say, p. 21. "It (christianity) was favored by the extirpation of the religion of the Druid." Druidism, Sir, was not unfavorable to christianity; and it is well known to learned Welshmen, that many of the ministers of that singular code became christian teachers. Nor has Druidism been even yet wholly extirpated. There are still a few of that class of men in Wales, whom you term Druids, who observe the degrees and ceremonies of the Bardic Code, and who are initiated into its mysteries. (+)

Dr. Southey asserts that the Welsh, whom you improperly call *Welch*, had a purer faith than the Saxons. This you deny, pp. 54, 55. and maintain that their faith was the same as that of your church, because they were always, you affirm, in communion with the see of Rome. As you, Sir, like your predecessors in the same line of argument, place great stress upon the communion of the British church with the see of Rome, permit me to lay before you the following facts. (1) Brân, as I have shown, first brought the gospel to Britain about A. D. 59; and about A. D. 180, Lucius applied to pope Eleutherius and obtained four missionaries to preach the gospel in Britain. Now from A. D. 59 to 180 there is a period of 121 years, and during all that time we have no account whatever of any communication between the British christians and the see of Rome. If any record of the kind be in existence, produce it, vague and uncertain conjectures will not avail; I want positive proof; and until that be produced, I maintain that the early British christians were *not* always in communion with the see of Rome. (2) Augustine with his forty monks came to England about the year 596, and began to preach to the Saxons. But from 180 to 596, there is a period of 416 years; and during these four centuries there is no proof

(*) Arch. of Wales, vol. ii. p. 63. Triad 35.

(+) Vide Dr. W. Owen Pughe's luminous account of Bardism prefixed to his translation of the Elegies of Llywarch Hen.

upon record that the Welsh christians were in communion with the see of Rome, or acknowledged the supremacy of the pope either in temporal or spiritual matters. This I consider as a positive fact incapable of successful contradiction. Here then I might pause, and safely maintain that your assertion respecting the uninterrupted communion of the British church with the see of Rome is not supported by facts, and is indefensible; but I will go a step further. (3) It is well known that the Britons differed from the Romans in the mode of Baptism, and the time of keeping Easter. Augustine demanded that they should conform to the Roman ritual in these things, and acknowledge his "metropolitan jurisdiction over them, which the pope had conferred upon him." You admit that "all the demands of St. Augustine were refused." With these facts before us, is it not fair to conclude that the Britons, or the Welsh, were not in communion with the see of Rome? If the difference in the baptismal formulary be as you insinuate, a mere trifle, why did Augustine so strenuously insist upon conformity? Has not the see of Rome always required uniformity in the mode of baptism, and would she tolerate her members if they adopted the Greek form, for instance, in preference to that prescribed by the Roman ritual? If no point of faith be implicated in the computation and observance of Easter, what was the cause of the cruelty and bloodshed which followed the important decision of the council held at Whitby? Would the Welsh have refused St. Augustine's metropolitan jurisdiction over them, as ordered by the pope, if they acknowledged the pope's supremacy in spiritual things? True, Augustine was but *an intermediate prelate*, yet he was, according to your own showing, raised to the dignity which he enjoyed, *by the pope*. Admitting this fact, the legitimate conclusion is, that by rejecting the metropolitan jurisdiction of a bishop so constituted, they rejected the pope's supremacy. This rejection also took place at a time when people were rude and illiterate, and when just ideas of liberty and independence were not generally understood. But you consider this rejection merely as an affair of local discipline, which might, and which is often exercised by Roman Catholic Prelates, without impugning the supremacy of the see of Rome. I am aware of the

fact, but I deny the conclusion which you draw from it. The prelate who opposes the pope, even in what you term local discipline, most certainly denies his supremacy in religious matters. I further maintain that this independence in some of the Catholic bishops and clergy, is not beheld with a gracious eye by your chief bishop, and that coercive measures would be immediately resorted to in order to enforce obedience, were it not for a dread of the consequences. Let us take France as an example. You are, of course, acquainted with the liberties of the Gallican church. Respecting the manner in which these liberties are viewed by the see of Rome, let us hear Napoleon, who evidently knew more of the secret wishes and design of your popes and cardinals than either yourself or Dr. Southey.

“The popes could not forgive us our liberties of the Gallican church. The four famous propositions of Bossuet, in particular, provoked their resentment. It was, in their opinion, a real hostile manifesto, and they accordingly considered us at least as much out of the pale of the church as the Protestants. They thought us as guilty as them, perhaps more so, and if they did not overwhelm us with their ostensive thunders, it was because they dreaded the consequences—our separation. The example of England was before them. They did not wish to cut off their right arm with their own hand, but they were constantly on the watch for a favourable opportunity, they trusted to time for it. They are, no doubt, on the point of believing, that it has now actually happened. They, will, however, be again disappointed by the light of the century and the manners of the times. Some time before my coronation, said the Emperor, the Pope wished to see me, and made it a point to visit me himself. He had made many concessions. He had come to Paris for the purpose of crowning me, he consented to place the crown on my head, he dispensed with the ceremony of the public communion, he had, therefore, in his opinion, many compensations to expect in return. He had accordingly at first dreamt of Romagna and the Legations, but he began to suspect that he should be obliged to give up all that. He then lowered his pretensions to a very trifling favor, as he called it, my signature to an ancient docu-

ment, a worn-out rag, which he held from Louis xiv. 'Do me that favour, said he, in fact it signifies nothing.' 'Cheerfully, most holy father, and the thing is done, if it be feasible.' It was, however, a declaration, in which Louis xiv, at the close of his life, seduced by Madame de Maintenon, or prevailed upon by his confessors, expressed his disapprobation of the celebrated articles of 1682, the foundation of the liberties of the Gallican church." (*) I hardly need add, Sir, that Napoleon did not annex his signature to this document, and that his refusal to do so gave great offence.

Having thus shown that the ancient British church was *not* *always* in communion with the See of Rome, it remains to ascertain whether its faith agreed with that of the Roman Catholic church at the period under consideration. From an examination of Taliesin's poems, it is evident that the British church had received the notion of a Trinity at the time of the Saxon invasion, but there are good grounds for believing that the other parts of its religious creed were the same as those which Morgan or Pelagius taught. For (1) Pelagius preached with great acceptance to his countrymen before he went to Rome and other foreign parts; nor did his doctrines give any umbrage, because they were the commonly received doctrines of the British church. † (2) when Pelagius visited Rome and other places, his religious views were found to vary considerably from those adopted by your church; a cry of heresy was raised; persecution followed; and the learned Briton became an object of deadly hatred and of bitter execration. The shameful particulars are too well known to need recital. (3) And that the British church had embraced that view of christianity named Pelagianism, consisting of a mixture of christianity and of bardism, and that it was its commonly received creed, appears very evident from the great efforts made to exterminate it, and the length of time which elapsed before this was effected. How far Dr. Southey may consider Pelagianism as more pure than Roman Catholicism, is his own consideration,

To this view of the case, you oppose the request of St. Augus-

(*) Journal of the Count De Las Cases, vol. iii. pp. 206, 207. 1st. Ed.

(†) Vide Camb. Biog. p. 126, 127, Art. Garmon or St. Germain.

tine to the Welsh clergy to join him and his companions in preaching the word of God to the Pagans; and you argue, that if they had not held the same common faith, such a request would not have been made. I answer, that as it has been shown that the British church was not in communion with the See of Rome at that time, it is fair to conclude that Augustine did not exactly know what were the particular doctrines of the Britons. He might suppose that as christians their views coincided with his own, and under that impression he probably made the request. Even if he had been conscious of a difference, the circumstances in which he and his monks were placed, would have justified the application which he made.

You say that Gildas was a Welshman; but this is not correct. He was a North Briton, and the Son of Caw, Lord of Cwm Cawlwyd, supposed to be the same as Glencoe, rendered famous for its infernal massacre. In his early youth, Gildas was a warrior and a poet; but having lost his patrimony by the fatal battle of Cattraeth, he retired into Wales, turned monk, and became as conspicuous in his old age for querulousness and irascibility, as he had been distinguished in his youth for martial bravery and poetic fire.* Little reliance can be placed upon his statements, as he indiscriminately finds fault with every body and with every thing. His mind was soured by misfortune; every thing appeared to him under the worst of colours; and his book abounds with abuse and scurrility.

The substance of what I have advanced is, that christianity was introduced into this Island, about A. D. 59, by a British prince; that the British church was not in communion with the See of Rome during the first five centuries of the christian æra, nor acknowledged the supremacy of the pope during those periods; and that the commonly received doctrines of the British church were these which are now named Pelagianism. How far I have proved these positions, I respectfully submit to your consideration.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

CAMBER.

May 15th, 1826.

(*) Camb. Biog. p. 8.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

I request the insertion of the following Epistle, for the purpose of inquiring, if there be any foundation for its genuineness, and what it is. If it be true, it is a valuable document; but if false, it deserves to be exploded. To my own mind, it bears the marks of a forgery; and looks more like the production of a Priest, than a civil Governor. I once saw it in a poor person's house, framed; but I now extract it from a volume published some time since.

INQUIRER.

JESUS CHRIST.

(“From an ancient M. S. in possession of Lord Massareen.”)

“It being the usual custom of the Roman Governors, to inform the Senate and People of Rome, of such material things as happened in their respective provinces; in the days of Tiberius Cæsar, the Emperor, Publius Lentulus, President of Judea, wrote the following Epistle to the Senate, concerning our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:—There appeared in these our days, a man of great virtue, named Jesus Christ, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles accepted for a Prophet of Truth, but his disciples call him the son of God.—He raiseth the dead, and cureth all manner of diseases; a man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with a very reverend countenance, such as the beholders may both love and fear, his hair the colour of a chesnut full ripe, plain to his ears, whence downward it is more orient, curling and waving about his shoulders; in the midst of his forehead is a seam or partition of his hair, after the manner of the Nazarites, his forehead plain and very delicate, his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a lovely red, his nose and mouth so formed, as nothing can be reprehended, his beard thickish, in colour like his hair, not over long, but forked; his look innocent and mature, his eyes gray, clear and quick; in reproving he is terrible, in admonishing he is courteous and fair spoken, pleasant in conversation, mixed with

gravity ; it cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep ; in proportions of body most excellent, his hands and arms delectable to behold, in speaking very temperate, modest and wise, a man for his singular beauty surpassing the children of men."

Such is the letter, said to be written by the President of Judea, in the time of our Saviour, giving a description of his character and person. I have said above, that to my own mind, it bears the marks of a forgery. And my reasons are the following.

A Roman Governor would have expressed himself in more qualified terms. He would not have said, "He raiseth the dead and cureth all manner of diseases ;" but that it was affirmed so of him, by his disciples.

I question too, whether he would have given himself so much trouble, in obtaining so minute a description of the person of Christ. His curiosity must have been greatly excited indeed, or he must have been half a believer, to enter into such particulars. He must have employed an artist to sketch so perfect a portraiture, or he must have had the original before him, and been an artist himself.

I am not satisfied that the description is Jewish. Have not the Jews generally black hair, black eyes, and dark or olive complexions?

The description, I think, is not consistent with either probability or the Scriptures. It can hardly be supposed, that he had a "face without wrinkle," though not more than thirty or thirty-three years of age. It is more natural to conclude, from his acute mental suffering for the sad state of his unhappy countrymen, that it displayed the deep lines of sorrow. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." "He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

For these reasons, I am induced to question the genuineness of this letter. But I write more with a view of being satisfied myself, than of satisfying others ; and I trust some of your correspondents will be able to answer the inquiries which I have made above.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

THE very flattering inquiries of your correspondent concerning me, induces me to inform him that I am still alive, and still possessed of the power of speech. I do not know why all who heard "The Plain Speaker" deliver his opinions should be *astonished*. The plainness of his manner was only what might have been expected from him. If he should ever speak again, he will use the same freedom as in his former attempts; it will be his aim to be honest in his address, and true to his own convictions. I say, if he should ever speak again, for he cannot pledge himself to do so, without some support. He is, as he must expect to continue, if he "will be talking," a poor man. His former numbers, containing eight pages each, price one penny, have, from the distance of the printer, and the limited sale, been a considerable expense to him. When a sufficient number of subscribers, at the old price, or to the work in an extended form, twelve pages, for two pence each number, can be obtained, I pledge myself to commence a New Series.

THE PLAIN SPEAKER.

LESSON OF PEACE FOR PROFESSING CHRISTIANS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

IN every instance where *Jesus Christ* has failed to form the temper to peace and harmony, it might be well to try what *Seneca* would do. Perhaps this celebrated heathen might have greater influence with persons of this description, than the teacher sent from God; or, perhaps, he might appear more worthy of their obedience, veneration, and love. And where one remedy has failed, it were a pity, not to try another, which might prove more effectual. Such persons, it is true, in this case, would cease to be christians, and would become Senecans; but if they became at the same time more kind and gentle in their dispositions, would it not be better for them, and christianity, and the world at large? And might they not after being

thus tutored by Seneca, become christians in truth and indeed ? In plain terms, when professing christians have not peaceable dispositions, they do not merely sink below the standard of Jesus Christ, but they sink below that of a heathen ! And though this is a severe reflection, yet might it not contribute as effectually as any thing, to preserve the “unity of the spirit in the bond of peace ?”

AMICUS.

THE GLEANER.

“WE CULL THE CHOICEST.”

RELIGION AND MURDER.

SFORZA, duke of Milan, was assassinated in the cathedral church of Milan, after the assassins had put up their prayers for courage to perpetrate the deed. It is a still stronger proof how low morality was in those days, that the pope himself, Sixtus IV. attempted to assassinate the two brothers, Lorenzo and Julian de' Medici ; choosing the elevation of the host as a proper time when the people were busy in their devotions ; nay more, this very pope, with unparalleled impudence, excommunicated the Florentines for doing justice on the intended assassins. The most sacred oaths were in vain employed as a security against that horrid crime. It was customary for a sovereign to entice to his court his enemy, by the solemn assurance that he would do him no harm, and to murder him during the gaiety of the banquet. But these instances were nothing compared to the massacre of St. Bartholomew where many thousands were butchered with treachery and inhumanity. I recollect reading of one of the principal performers in this sanguinary drama, who being asked by his confessor to make atonement for his sins, and particularly for those committed on that occasion, declared that his services to God on that day, for the number of deaths he had caused, were a sufficient atonement for every other crime.

Memoirs of the Margravine of Anspach.

INTELLIGENCE.

On Friday March 24th, was held at Manchester, the annual Meeting of the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society. In the morning the Rev. Abraham Bennett, late of Poole, who has recently been engaged by the Society as a permanent missionary, preached in the Cross Street Chapel, a Sermon from 1 Tim. ii. 5 & 6.

The attendance was numerous and respectable, and the Sermon was heard with that deep attention and interest which it merited. The discourse, which blended zeal with charity and practical with doctrinal preaching, may be regarded as a specimen of the manner in which Mr. Bennett proposes to lay the Gospel before the poor. Such a manner cannot fail of securing success. If argument does not convince, a spirit of charity may conciliate, and must improve those, who are addressed. And if the genuine spirit of christian benevolence be increased in the district to which exertions are directed, the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society will greatly rejoice, even although, the tenets which distinguish them from most of their Christian Brethren, may not meet with a reception equally extensive. Not that they are unsolicitous for the diffusion of their religious opinions—but if they cannot obtain all they wish—they rejoice to obtain a part. And they are persuaded, that this part is the precursor of greater good. The operation of christian love, will prepare the way for the reception of christian truth, and a pure heart, will generally secure an enlightened understanding. In proportion as the *acrimonious* spirit of controversy disappears will the judgement lose its trammels, and it cannot but be sincerely wished by every real friend of Christianity, that a disposition to denounce “those that oppose themselves,” whether evinced in the conduct of reputed orthodox or reputed heretical preachers, and which is no other than Priestcraft and ill nature modified by the spirit of the times, may soon cease to diminish the efficacy of the principles of the mild and benevolent Jesus.

In the after part of the day a meeting was held for the despatch of business in the school room of the Unitarian Chapel, Mosley Street, the Rev. J. G. Robberds in the chair.

The proceedings were commenced by the Chairman, with a few excellent prefatory remarks explaining the nature and objects of the society. The Secretary then read the report of the committee during the last year: from which among other things it appeared that the Society supplied six stations with the means of moral and intellectual improvement and educated above six hundred children in its Sunday schools. Representatives from each of the stations were then called on to furnish the meeting with an account of the state and prospects of Unitarian christianity in their several neighbourhoods. They were kindly

requested by the chairman to speak to the whole matter; not to Unitarianism as a system of belief merely, but to Unitarianism as a stimulus to duty also; to the practice as well as the profession of primitive christianity. The statement of these humble and simple minded persons afforded great pleasure to the audience.

It appeared from the report that the society is deficient in funds. This deficiency it is hoped will soon be supplied—for whether the nature and objects of the society be regarded, what it has effected and is effecting, or what it promises to effect, its merits, it is presumed, will be felt to be intimately connected with the promotion of virtue, religion and happiness.

J. R. BEARD, *Secretary.*

Obituary.

Died, on the 18th of April, aged 66, Mr. Edward Astbury, of Wellington, minister of the Unitarian congregation, Delamere Forest. It is impossible to do justice to the character of the deceased without being in possession of the particulars of his life; but as those which I have been able to collect may be instructive to Unitarians, I have sent them for insertion in the Christian Reflector.

In his younger days he belonged to the Wesleyan Methodists, and from his usefulness and exemplary life, he might have been a *round preacher*, but the doubts which he expressed as to the soundness of their doctrine prevented the appointment, and he became an antinomian, and at last a Unitarian baptist, in which faith he died, having “proved all things,” and held fast that which he conceived to be good. A retentive memory, and a knowledge of the scriptures compensated in a great measure for his want of education. He was faithful in the discharge of his social duties, and often expressed a wish to die rather than to live longer than he could be really useful. His last words were, “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” Words truly consoling to his relatives and friends. He was interred in the burying ground belonging to the Chapel, by the Rev. J. Cooper, of Nantwich, who preached an excellent sermon on the occasion to a crowded congregation.

M.

Lately, at Soham, after a long and painful affliction, the Rev. J. Gisburne, some years since the minister of the Unitarian baptist congregation, at Trowbridge.

For Notice to Correspondents see the last page of the Cover.

F. B. Wright, Printer.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 19. NEW SERIES. Price 4½d. JULY 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(From Burder's Oriental Literature.)

ISAIAH, xxi. 11. .

Watchman, what of the night?

The attendant, who strikes the bell in India, is called the ghuree-alee; the following is the mode used in obtaining the time. "The apparatus with which the hours are measured and announced, consists of a shallow bell-metal pan, named from its office, ghuree-al, and suspended so as to be easily struck with a wooden mallet, by the ghuree-alee, who thus strikes the ghurees as they pass, and which he learns from an empty thin brass-cup, (kutoree,) perforated at the bottom, and placed on the surface of the water in a large vessel, where nothing can disturb it, while the water gradually fills the cup, and sinks it in the space of one ghuree, to which this hour cup, or kutoree, has previously been adjusted astronomically, by an astrolabe, used for such purposes in India."

"The first ghuree of the first puhur is so far sacred to the emperor of Hindustan, that his ghuree-alee alone strikes one for it. The second ghuree is known by two blows on the ghuree-al, and so on: one stroke is added for every ghuree to the highest, which (assuming the equinoctial periods for this statement,) is eight, announced by eight distinct blows for the past ghurees; after which, with a slight intermission, the gujur of eight bells is struck, or rung, as noted in the diagram, by the cbime figure 8, and then one hollow sound publishes the first puhur, din, or rat. In one ghuree or 24 minutes, after this, the

same reiteration takes place; but here stops at the seventh, or meridional ghuree, and is then followed with its gujur, or chime of 15, of which eight are for the first watch, and seven for the second. Thus the hours, and their divisions, are marked through the whole day. Six or eight people are required to attend the establishment of a ghuree, four through the day, and as many at night; so that none but wealthy men, or grantees, can afford to support one as a necessary appendage of their consequence and rank, which is convenient enough for the other inhabitants, who would have nothing of this sort to consult, as (those being excepted which are attached to their armies,) I imagine there are no other public clocks in India." *Asiatic Researches*, vol. v. p. 88.

Something of this kind was anciently practised in Persia, for JOSEPHUS relates, (*Ant. lib. xi. c. 6.*) that the emperor Artaxerxes enquired the hour of the night of those whose office it was to inform him. It appears too, that the Romans had youths who were employed to announce the hour. Nero directed this to be done at his table, that the guests might more ardently enjoy what remained of life and good cheer. MARTIAL (*lib. viii. Epig. 67.*) complains

Horas quinque puer nondum tibi nunciat, et tu,

Jam convivâ mihi, Cæciliane, venis.

"The boy has not given you notice of the fifth hour, yet you come to be my guest."

JUVENAL, reckoning up the inconveniences of old age, adds,

clamore opus est ut sentiat auris,

Quem dicat venisse puer, quot nunciat Horas.

Sat. x. v. 215.

"The boy who comes to tell the hours, must bawl loudly into his ears, to make him hear."

The military watches among the Romans were announced by sound of a trumpet.

Et jam quarta canit venturam buccina lucem.

PROPERTIUS, *lib. iv. El. 4.*

Pompey, determining to sail away privately, without alarming Cæsar's camp, orders,

ne litora clamor

Nauticus exagitet, nec buccina dividat Horas.

LUCAN, *Pharsal. lib. ii.*

ON CONFIRMATION.

(Concluded from page 106.)

THE next thing to be noticed is the promise these said Sponsors make for the child, which is that "he shall keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in the same, *all* the days of his life" this is indeed a lamentable instance of human presumption.

But to proceed. These commandments of God, are, we are informed, in number, ten; they are comprised in the Decalogue; they are enumerated in the Catechism, as those commandments which Sponsors promise that their god-children shall obey. Thus a christian, (a church of England christian) refers to the Mosaic dispensation, to the tables of the law, for his standard of duty; the law of Moses, not the law of Christ is the rule and guide of those "children being now come to the years of discretion" who seek to be initiated by the ceremony of Confirmation, into that church, and into that christianity, which is part and parcel of the law of England. The ten commandments being "divided into two tables,"—from the first is deduced the duty to be rendered unto God, in the following terms. "My duty towards God is to believe in him, to fear him and to love him with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him, to give him thanks, to put my whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honor his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of my life."

Now excellent as all this certainly is, yet it as certainly is not to be found in the first table of the Decalogue, and ought not therefore to be fathered thereon. It would be too tedious here to enumerate the commandments of Moses but it will not be a severe task upon the reader's memory to compare them with the *lesson* which they are said to teach. It may however be remarked that with the exception of the fifth, and perhaps the first clause of the fourth, all the ten commandments are negative. Jesus Christ on the contrary inculcated positive virtue; not only absence from sin and transgression, but a vital active principle of benevolence to man and of piety to God, Indeed the "duty towards God" professed to be learnt from the commandments in the catechism, and repeated by the Catechumen as an essential preliminary of Confirmation, exhibits far more traces of the mission of Christ than of Moses.

But what shall we say of the honesty which penned, and the integrity which teaches any young person to assert that from the second table of the Decalogue he learns as follows "my duty towards my neighbour is to love him as myself and to do unto all men, as I would they should do unto me. To love honor and succour my father and mother. To honor and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him. To submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and

masters. To order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. To hurt nobody by word or deed. To be true and just in all my dealings. To bear no malice nor hatred in my heart. To keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil speaking, lying and slandering. To keep my body in temperance, soberness and chastity. Not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labor truly to get my own living and to do my duty in that state of life, unto which it shall please God to call me." To weed out from this list of duties those principles which Moses taught, and distinguish them from those which originated with our Saviour must as before, be left to the performance of the reader. Suffice it to say that the inferences assumed to be deduced from the second table, may in general be termed unfounded and false. That table does not teach, nor is the doctrine to be found in any part of the Decalogue, that man's "duty to his neighbour is to love him as himself, and to do unto all men, as he would they should do unto him." Christ, teaches this, the ten commandments do not. Nor do they teach us "to honor and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him; to submit to all governors, teachers, spiritual pastors and masters; and to order ourselves lowly and reverently to all our betters." The slavish despicable spirit which would inculcate such servile notions, is only to be equalled by the daring effrontery which can palm them upon that lawgiver who slew an Egyptian task-master, in defence of an oppressed countryman. The allegiance due to the sovereign and the obedience due to those to whom authority is delegated, as necessary to the well being of society, are principles now so well understood, as not to require propping up by the authority of patriarchal times. If they did, their foundation would be untenable. Truly Moses gives a fine example of submission to governors and masters; of a lowly and reverent spirit to all our betters; of servile truckling to ecclesiastical domination and sacerdotal tyranny in the shape of teachers and spiritual pastors. But enough, and more than enough. Let the comparison be completed, and plenty of materials will be furnished, arousing unqualified disgust at that hierarchical spirit which scrupled not to put even the ten commandments in requisition, and profess to draw from them, doctrines, which are nothing less than the spiritual dogmas of passive obedience and non-resistance.

Q. "Now do you think yourself bound to renew this solemn promise and vow, that was made in your name at your baptism?"

A. I do!"

And why? Is that "young person" really come to years of discretion, who thinks himself *bound* to renew a solemn promise and vow officiously made in his name without his privity and consent? If rash vows are made, let the consequences be borne by those who have the temerity to bind themselves; but no one surely is bound to fulfil another's pledge, without he pleases. The pithiness of the reply to this question is to be lamented.

What forms the bond? it may be inquired. In what character or capacity is the individual bound? Is it as a rational being, as a christian or as a member of the church of England? Certainly not as a rational being, for who in the name of common sense considers himself "bound" to ratify vows, because others may have been pleased to enrol them in his name? Not as a christian;—for so far from a disciple of Jesus, being doomed to the ignominious station of a manacled slave, crouching and quailing beneath the thralldom of spiritual domination, he is exhorted to maintain, that mental independence, which is his inalienable right as a man;—a right not abrogated by that Gospel, which teaches him to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free." If therefore he is "bound" at all, it is as a member of the church by law established, into whose service he was impressed while unable to resist, and whose trammels it appears he is never to throw off. The sprinkling of his face with water at baptism, is a talismanic charm, and the spell-bound wight becomes a never to be emancipated slave. He is "bound to renew," i. e. to ratify and confirm a "solemn promise and vow," which if he thinks at all he knows he can never fulfil. Yet in spite of this he is asked, *Q.* "Are you willing to ratify and confirm the same, in your own person, before God, and the congregation?" *A.* By God's help so I will, and I heartily thank our heavenly father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour, and I pray unto God, to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end." Why must the assistance of the Almighty be invoked? had the sponsors shewn a little more modesty, in their vows, and limited their unbounded promises;—had they prayed for divine assistance, as essential, to the fulfilment of those vows, then would the present invocation be at least in season. But these vows and promises were made, without any appeals for divine grace, and made too, in as peremptory terms, as language can supply. Whoever therefore takes upon himself the satisfying of these baptismal vows, takes upon himself a personal responsibility. Whether the help of God, be vouchsafed or not, (and who will assert that it will always be vouchsafed,) with or without any extraneous aid, it is a personal, individual business; he does it "in his own person," and it becomes a personal, an incumbent duty.

Very comfortable however must be the opinion that beneath this heavy load of responsibility, he is called to a "state of salvation," though it appears to plain'thinkers as if he was more indebted for it, to the exertions of his sponsors, through or by whom he becomes possessed of it, than "through Jesus Christ our Saviour." But it is still possible to fall away from this happy state, and hence the young person is instructed to say, "I pray unto God, to give me his grace that I may continue in the same unto my life's end." After all therefore, these privileges and immunities, are held by an insecure tenure; the trials and

temptations of life are still active,—the devil and his works are in existence,—the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh, may be too powerful to be resisted,—the articles of the christian faith, may be neglected, and the promise to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same until death, may be forgotten or disregarded. Under these circumstances therefore prudence will dictate, that one of two alternatives be embraced. Either that the "order of confirmation" be frequently observed,—or not resorted to, until life be fast drawing to a close. There is indeed this objection to the first, that once is deemed amply sufficient for "any christian to be confirmed. As there is one baptism, so there is required but one solemn ratification or confirmation of it; and they shew themselves very ignorant, who go the Bishop to be confirmed, every time he confirms."(*) But why ignorant? Ought not such conduct to be deemed rather a proof of wisdom? The singular advantages which confirmation imparts, are not surely, neutralized, or rendered less efficacious by frequent use, (†) but if, to entertain such an opinion, be "very ignorant" there is still the alternative left, of securing the advantages of confirmation, when the hour of death approaches. Then indeed it would appear to the expiring mortal as an heavenly messenger, charged with the destruction of all doubt and anxiety and introducing the soul instantaneously into the mansions of the blessed. Then assured of being regenerated by water and the holy Ghost, (‡) of the "forgiveness of all his sins,"—and certified of possessing "the favor and gracious goodness" of almighty God;—a member of the church of England would meet death with triumphant enthusiasm; the day of judgment would be to him the harbinger of glory, and everlasting happiness would be his unquestionably. But then comes the question, what kind of basis is it upon which these hopes, these anticipations, would rest? Merely the wood, hay, and stubble of man's device. Verily, is the church of England, any thing more than the Romish church, done into English?

Next comes the grave question, "Is not confirmation a serious thing?" Here there can hardly be two opinions; it is serious, and it is worthy of a little serious reflection; it is worthy the serious attention not only of those confirmed, but of baptismal spon-

(*) Lewis' Church catechism explained &c."

(†) "I remember" says Gilbert Wakefield, in his *Memoirs*, "when I was confirmed at Kingston, a woman, old enough to have been my Grandmother, underwent this operation for the *fourth* time at least. 'I feel myself' said she so much strengthened by the bishop's hands!" Poor Wakefield! What obtuseness of intellect did he not manifest in calling this *strengthening operation* an "insufferable farce."

(‡) When the rite of Confirmation was first invented, it was performed immediately after baptism. Hence the relevancy of the term regenerate, here used, which then referred to the previous ceremony. What does the term mean now? This instantaneous regeneration is designated by another purblind theologian as "either miracle, magic, or superstition." Lectures by W. J. Fox.

sors, and church dignataries, and thorough paced episcopalian believers. It is serious for a mitred prelate to affirm indiscriminately of a multitude of persons, that they are regenerated by "the Almighty and ever-living God," and that all their sins are forgiven. It is serious even for a right reverend father to certify of and to this same multitude, of the extension to them of the "favor and gracious goodness of the almighty and everlast-God." It is serious for him to use unqualified assertions which have a very injurious tendency, inasmuch, as they create erroneous views of a "state of salvation" and encourage false hopes of future happiness; those views and hopes being founded on a ceremony, which he knows, (or ought to know) is not of scriptural authority,—a ceremony whose supposed efficacy depends entirely upon the degree of superstitious veneration with which it is regarded, and which may be truly characterized, as unmeaning, contradictory, unscriptural, and presumptuous. It is the offspring of human authority,—not authorized by the lawgiver of the christian church. It also a subject for serious consideration to that episcopalian, who swallows with blind credulity and undoubting faith all which falls from the lips of his Rev. Bishop, or which he finds in the sacred volume of common prayer.

It is serious for sponsors to make unconditional promises on behalf of others, which they cannot fulfil; to make a solemn tender of vows, without intending their ratification. It is serious for any one to take the consequences of another's rashness upon himself, and more serious still, to bind himself to the performance of impossibilities, and the discharge of contradictory engagements. Is confirmation then, a serious thing?" Who dare answer in the negative?

Little more, need be advanced on the subject. The attempt may be forgiven to enumerate the moral effects which confirmation ought to produce, (*) but where are those effects discernible in practice? The ceremony seldom if ever makes a deep impression, it is either engaged in from levity, custom, vanity, or some other equally worthless cause, and not one moral principle does it seem to fix permanently in the breast. There may certainly be exceptions to this, but the generality of the confirmed, appear not to be at all improved by the ceremony; to have imbibed any impulses, exciting to superior moral conduct, or have derived any motives strongly urging to the attainment of a high degree of moral excellence. Indeed how can such a result be expected? As confirmation will lead (a believer) at once to heaven and happiness, if the ritual of the church, and the language of her bishop have any meaning, it is surely a work of ridiculous supererogation to be perpetually plagued and encumbered, by a rigid undeviating observance of the moral law. And hence it is absurd to anticipate or require such an effect. There being, no cause, or motive adequate to its production.

(*) See concluding questions, *Christian Reflector*, page 32.

This certainly is a conclusion, in which a true orthodox nose may imagine the discovery of a slight scent of heresy; but it is a legitimate one, whether it be, or be not redolent, of that execrable spirit, which well fed pluralists, ever denounce as the most heinous of all mortal sins,—the spirit of heterodoxy. And even if the church, will not afford any countenance to such doctrines, which in truth can hardly be expected, still many will remain (perchance they may be only superficial observers) who will retain the opinion, that a moral, well disciplined life, must be founded on, and supported by, far more powerfully influential motives than the “order of confirmation” is able to produce. This opinion will be entertained *maugre* the exertions of those bishops, and curates, and spiritual pastors of every various grade, for whom so many pious prayers^(*) ascend to the Almighty that they may be filled with the “healthful spirit of his grace.” When this mighty *marvel* is accomplished, will those nobly disinterested laborers in the vineyard of Christ be listened to with deference, and their decision with respect to the moral benefits of confirmation, be submitted to. But not till then.

Lastly we arrive at this startling conclusion, that “after confirmation” it becomes a “duty to serve God in truth and righteousness” by which is obtained a “promise of remission of sins through Christ, of God’s favor and blessing, in this life, and of eternal life in the next.” (†)

Against this conclusion Dissenters must protest. The performance of a ritual enjoined by human authority is not an indispensable preparation for a life of virtue. Man is quite as capable without the aid of confirmation, as he can possibly be with it, of becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ. The lawgiver of Christians—the only legitimate authority, has declared what will procure acceptance with the Father, without enjoining as a preparatory step the necessity of his followers kneeling beneath the holy hands of a mitred teacher of humility; yea even though he be thoroughly impregnated with divine grace—or that as an essential preliminary to the Lord’s table, (§) and an essential christian duty, it is necessary to participate in that incongruous tissue of assumption and impiety—the rite of confirmation.

“Be not entangled in the yoke of bondage.”

(*) Amongst the morning prayers, appointed to be used “daily throughout the year,” may be found this aspiration; “Almighty and everlasting God, who alone workest great marvels; send down upon our Bishops and Curates &c., the healthful spirit of thy grace.” “The connection (observes Palmer) unhappily suggests what cannot be thought to have been intended, viz. that it is a marvellous thing for Curates, and even Bishops, to have grace.” Prot. Diss. Catceism.

(†) See Questions.

(§) A doctrine of the Church of England.

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS AT WIGAN.

No. V.

The ability of man to do God's will.

With what greater degree of folly can any man be charged than that he exposes himself by a busy and solicitous attention to effect what he and all the world know to be impracticable? Is it not the most sarcastical and fatal of all deceptions, to invite men to impossible conditions of pardon and salvation and then to damn them for not obeying them?

THIS was the subject of our last paper and will be of this. We, the Unitarians maintained the positive, they, the Trinitarians the negative; They have boasted of having confuted us but have not shown in what manner they have done it. If like the boasting traveller they assert in places and among persons from whom they expect no contradiction that at a certain place called Rhodes they have at one leap cleared a ditch of nine yards and could do it again if they were there; we say to them as one did to him, fancy this to be Rhodes and show us the leap. Their refusing to do this Mr. Editor, will leave a shrewd suspicion on the minds of your readers that they have never done it at Rhodes, whatever excuses they may advance for not doing it here.

It will be recollected that we closed our last paper by observing Christ our master did not dismiss the young man who came to him with that interesting and most important question, good master what must I do to inherit eternal life? to whom he replied, keep the commandments, he did not dismiss him with a joke, he did not set him to carry a mountain in order to show him the impracticability, the utter impossibility of the thing. If he had not meant what he said, I believe he would not have said it, and it is with our opponents to prove that Jesus, whom they call their God, said what he did not mean. If man be not a free, voluntary and uncontrouled agent in the great matter of salvation, if he cannot do God's will in some manner consistent with the nature of his requirement, and in such a manner as to obtain his approbation, then he is not, he cannot be accountable for not doing it; if he be, let those who contend he is, show us

how. See John xiii. 17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. Now if they could not do these things of which Jesus had given them a knowledge as their duty, with what propriety could he say, happy are ye if ye do them. Matt. v. 48. Be ye therefore perfect even as your father which is in heaven is perfect? Now if there be not some sense attaching itself to the term perfect in this place, which does not amount to absolute perfection; some sense in which those to whom he uttered the words, could be perfect in the sense intended without becoming absolutely so, then the command or precept of Christ in this place is not only absurdly ridiculous, but impossible; for none can be perfect in degree as God is perfect, or good as he is good. It is well known that this term is used by Christ with that kind of limitation, which its application to man, even in this state, must render absolutely necessary. Who does not know that it is an unlimited form of expression, the meaning of which must be determined by its relative situation, by the connection in which it is used, and with which many similar instances of unlimited expressions used in limited applications, the scriptures will furnish us. It does not follow from the use of the term perfect, that an absolute perfection in holiness is either required or attainable in this life, but that it is our duty to labour after it, to be reaching on towards perfection, to be pressing on towards the mark for the prize of our high calling, which is of God, in, through, or by Christ Jesus, Phil. iii. 13, 14, 15. this is being perfect in the scripture sense, *Pro perfecto est, qui perfecto proximus*, God accounts him perfect who is nearest to perfection; is a declaration of one of the most celebrated orthodox writers. Will our orthodox opponents believe him? These words, this preceptive command of Christ, is in my opinion decisive on the point in debate, of man's ability to do God's will in such a manner as he by Christ requires, and therefore must approve. I contend then that it is possible for man, or any man, or every man, who knows what God's will is, to do it if he chooses and to do it so as to please God.

The ability of man to do the will of God forms the foundation of human responsibility and man's non-performance of the will of God constitutes his criminality. If where there be no law

there is no transgression, where there is no power, no ability to perform, there can be no justice in demanding, no criminality in not performing. If men once think and believe that they cannot do the will of God they will not try to do it, and if it be a fact that they cannot, who can blame them for not trying? who would blame a man for not attempting to carry a thousand pounds weight, when it is known to himself and others that he cannot carry four hundred? and who can wonder that so few attempt to do the will of God, when from a thousand pulpits they are every sabbath gravely told, that they can do nothing good, no not so much as think one good thought, or do one good action, any more than the dead in their graves can raise themselves to life; that their very righteousness is as filthy rags, their best actions but splendid sins, that they are a set of moral monsters and miscreants all rotten to the very core, a mere mass of putridity and corruption, more hateful and detestable in the sight of God than the vilest reptile, or the most venomous serpent can be in the eyes of man; that they inherit from the womb the seeds of damnation, and that there is no crime however horrible but they would commit if they had but an opportunity; that the worst devil in hell is not viler than they are, only in degree? Now if this (so called evangelical description of man by nature) has any truth in it, who can wonder at the evil actions which take place? who can be astonished that men who constantly hear themselves thus depicted, should never attempt to do God's will? That constantly hearing this description of themselves by such venerable authority, they should at length come to believe it, and believing it should act accordingly by plunging headlong into every vice.

It is now a fact well known to humane and enlightened politicians, that the awful severities of the penal code have no tendency to diminish crime, and it will be sometime known to certain professed theologians that their constant eloquent philippics, alias dark and foul libels, against human nature have no tendency to make bad men better, but to increase their number, and make them worse. Our opponents suppose and tell us they believe that God demands unsinning and perfect obedience from his creatures. Had they studied the scripture instead of systems,

commentaries, and so called bodies of divinity, they could not have come to so erroneous a conclusion. They did not learn this I presume from their close study of the ciii. Psalm, either as a whole, or from verses 8—14. For he (God) knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. Also Psalm cxxx. 3, 4. To require of dependent creatures the moral perfection of the uncreated, self-existent, independent God, is what Jehovah has not done, is what he will not do, is what he cannot do, because it would be to require, to demand an impossibility, which his wisdom and goodness forbid. That being who is said to charge his angels with folly, and in whose sight the heavens are not clean, will not, does not, demand unsinning and perfect obedience from man. No, that be far from him! Those who assert this, charge God foolishly, and say of him the thing that is not right. But as I shall have to pursue this subject in another paper, I shall here pause.

J. R.

Hindley, May 9th, 1826.

ON PRACTICAL PREACHING.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

IN the two principal works which have lately been published against Unitarianism, (*) the most serious charges are brought against the religious character of our body. We are accused of pride and worldly-mindedness of an indisposition to submit ourselves to the love of Christ, and a departure from Evangelical faith and practice. Upon the flagrant injustice that is thus done to a class of men who are generally conscious of at least striving after christian perfection, I shall not at present remark. Supposing that Unitarians merit all the imputations that are lavished upon them, still it might perhaps be as well that our Orthodox brethren should be reminded of the apothegm, "Physician heal thyself." Conceiving that this piece of advice might avail the more with them if it proceeded from their own tongues, I send you a few extracts from a paper which appeared in

(*) That of Dr. Wardlaw, and that of Dr. J. P. Smith.

the "Congregational Magazine," for October 1825, entitled, "on the prejudices existing in some persons against practical preaching." "There is, (says the writer) a class of professors in the present day who *sicken with disgust, or fire with indignation*, when a minister follows up his statements of doctrine with plain and pressing exhortations to a corresponding and consistent practice. If a minister pursues the track thus (by our Lord) marked out and treads in the very steps of those infallible guides, (the apostles,) certain high bred professors instantly call him an Arminian, a legalist, a work-monger; endeavouring in every way to degrade him in the situation of his people and to alienate their minds from him."

The writer then proceeds to enquire into the cause of "this prejudice against practical preaching." "I ask then, (he continues,) does this unhappy prejudice arise from a weak and perverted judgement? or does the unhappy and injurious prejudice arise from *pride* and *over-weening* conceit? When a man aspires to the praise of superior knowledge or *exclusive orthodoxy*, giving out that he himself is some great one, he fancies that by depressing others, he becomes more conspicuous. As far as my observation has extended, the persons who are most inimical to practical preaching, are *remarkable* for their love of singularity, their fondness for paradoxes and the noisy clamour of debate, generally forward to contradict but impatient of contradiction; at once puerile in their ideas, positive and pedantic in their expressions. Or does this injurious and inveterate prejudice against the practical part of religion in the pulpit, rise from a constitutional indolence and an habitual love of ease and indulgence? To some the very words *duty, obedience, diligence, &c.* though taken from scripture have a *grating* sound. When these and similar terms expressive of our obligation under the gospel to live a holy, heavenly, active and useful life, come forth in a strain of energy from the lips of a preacher, the *eyes and agitated muscles of these professors* betray their uneasiness and emphatically evince their *loathing and abhorrence*. I know some who object to ministers of sound principles and excellent character, and when requested to say why they dislike them, the answer is—"we cannot bear to hear so much

about *doing* and *working*: it is driving with *the lash of Moses*, not drawing with *the love of Christ*." But then the life of these persons furnishes a key to open and explain both their partialities and antipathies.

J. R. B.

REVIEW.

Mental Wanderings: or Fragments on Priestcraft and Superstition. A Tale of other Times. By Phileleutherius. 12mo. p. p. 129. Liverpool, Printed. London, Teulon and Fox.

A MANLY and complete exposure of Priestcraft, by a writer of no ordinary power of mind. As its title imports, it is an imaginary production; and generally, its descriptions and personifications are peculiarly striking: not certainly always of the most pleasing cast, but delineated by the powerful pencil of truth; for what, indeed, is there in the character of Priestcraft, that is not either abhorrent or ridiculous? and things should be represented as they are, and not as they are not; but particularly those things which are baneful in their influence upon mankind. We scarcely know whether a finer subject than that of the work before us, could be furnished for the inimitable sketches of a Cruikshank, and as we have proceeded along, we have not been able to suppress the wish, that it had received the embellishments of this distinguished artist. It would then have exposed to the eye, as well as to the mind, the follies and deformities of that wicked spirit, which it is designed to chase from the earth. We do not, however, hesitate to say, that in its present form, it is a very valuable work; and that when it is read with attention, it can hardly fail to lead to good. Certainly, he must, indeed, have a perverted mind, who can rise up from its perusal, in love with Priestcraft.

We purpose presenting to our readers a brief outline of its structure, and shall then lay before them several extracts, as specimens of its character.

Phileleutherius, the Author, a person of a pensive but benevo-

lent disposition, takes (in imagination, of course,) a “nocturnal ramble ;” and led by chance or inclination, finds himself at length, like another Hervey, “among the tombs.” In the midst of his contemplations, excited by these touching mementos, a voice arrests his attention ; and a dialogue ensues between himself and his aerial visitant, on the evils of Priestcraft. While brooding over these direful calamities, and ready almost to implicate the justice of the Almighty, a light suddenly shines around him, and destiny appears ; the object of whose descent to this sublunary world is, to vindicate the righteousness of the Divine administration, and to unfold a brighter and infinitely glorious scene, in the consummation of things. After this, Phileleuthérius is addressed by a venerable old man, who may be considered his Mentor ; and who, on taking his leave, presents to him a manuscript containing the history of Priestcraft.

Thus far, may be considered the introduction to the main subject ; and the reader will find these pages richly scattered over with useful and salutary reflections.

From the history we learn, that Apollyon and Usurpatia, though father and daughter, contract a matrimonial alliance. The offspring of this ill asserted, disgusting union, are Despotism and Priestcraft ; who are appointed joint-regents of the empire of Apollyon and Usurpatia ; and who maintain their power and authority under all changes and events. They are imposed upon the people as the offspring of the gods, and descended from the celestial regions ; and Despotism assumes the name of Government, and Priestcraft of Religion.

Like their parents, they are unnaturally united in marriage ; and have children, grand-children, and great-grand-children,—a numerous progeny. Those that require particularly to be mentioned, are, of the first generation, Ignorance, Superstition, and Oppression ; of the second, Idleness and Vice ; and of the third, Poverty, Disease, and Misery.

From an insatiable thirst for power, and love of domination, her imperial, or *imperious* majesty, Priestcraft, finally assumes the reins of government to herself ; and the character of her royal consort, Despotism, merges into her own. Thus fired with boundless ambition, she resolves upon universal conquest, and

determines to traverse with her embattled legions the whole world. But an enterprize so stupendous, is to be proceeded in with caution; she accordingly makes choice of a set of ministers suited to her purpose. Of this grand assemblage of illustrious personages, we have Diabolos or Fraud, Force, Euthusiasm, Credulity, Fable and Jealousy. Fraud and Force (the former being prime minister) are chancellors of the exchequer, first lords of the treasury, and in time of war commanders in chief of the fleets and armies. Euthusiasm is secretary of state for the home department, and Credulity secretary of state for foreign affairs. Fable is master of the rolls, and Jealousy is the attorney general. The real characters of this motley cabinet, are concealed by disguises, in the shape of titles and distinctions,—except that of Force; and it is necessary that he should stand forth to view, for the purpose of intimidation in all his awful terrors; (p. 80.) with a heart

“like stone, a brazen brow, eyes which constantly flashed with indignation, and a menacing countenance. All his features were expressive of unrelenting cruelty, his voice was most vindictive, from his mouth rolled a torrent of imperious mandates, and destructive verdicts on pre-judged cases, which bore down all before him. His stature was gigantic, his hand like iron, and his whole appearance bespoke the terrible warrior, and the merciless tyrant: nor was he ever seen but in his coat of mail, with an iron helmet on his head, and all his instruments of death around him.”

Fraud is dubbed with the title of Wisdom, Euthusiasm with that of Devotion, Credulity with that of Faith, Fable with that of Truth, and Jealousy with that of Circumspection.

The officers of state thus wisely appointed, Priestcraft summons them to her aid, in solemn council, held in “the palace of Infatuation;” a spacious cave,” concealed by “the deadly night shade,” and impervious to the rays of the sun. Here, seated in her chair of state, her awful majesty addresses her “faithful adherents,” and unfolds to them her glorious purpose of universal aggrandizement and domination. But, like a wily politician she apprizes them of the difficulties in the way of its execution; and particularly cautions them against her most inveterate enemies,—Reason, Conscience, Truth, Virtue, Liberty. Having described

her principal enemies, and given directions as to the best mode of waging war with them, she alludes to an enemy nearer home, her royal and illustrious consort, Despotism ; and she charges her "faithful adherents" to watch over him and all his actions, and assist her, whenever opportunity may offer, to depose the tyrant. (pp. 113—15.)

The speech of her imperious majesty is received with tumultuous applause, which is followed by courtly addresses from the creatures of her power.

At length, the deliberations of the council ended, and proper dispositions made, she mounts her chariot, seizes the reins, and leads her minions forth to battle. (p. 123)

"Over reason, conscience, truth, virtue, liberty, and every thing excellent and valuable," she drives with maddened impetuosity, and relentless rage. "Forth from the chariot issue innumerable locusts, so voracious that they instantly devour every green thing. The country before her is like a garden, and (*but*) behind her like a wilderness, filled with dragons, satyrs, serpents, and venomous reptiles of every kind. All the ground she passes over, either becomes steril, or covered only with noxious plants."

"This," (concludes the old man's history) "was a sore evil and a great abomination in the sight of the Lord."

And here the history leaves us, in this sad and pitiable plight—in the midst of the frightful devastations of Priestcraft, and our hearts more harrowed up, than our bodies lacerated, by the unrelenting cruelties of this demon of darkness!—So we thought for the moment.

But Phileleutherius has managed his point well. He has taken us to the brink of despair, that the regions of hope might shine with a brighter and more resplendent lustre. From his researches in other quarters, or from some other old man, or some other kind destiny, (he does not inform us,) he has "learned (pp. 124, 125,) that while Priestcraft and her sons attempted to erect a second Babel, which should reach unto heaven, to consolidate their power too firmly to be broken, and to make themselves an everlasting name ; he who sitteth in the heavens derided their madness and audacity and sent among them the spirit of dissention and confusion ; and they were

scattered abroad. Her sons, (he concludes) "were divided, they rose up in opposition to each other, and her empire was broken."

And if it is, we will sing and give praise:—"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!"

But, we are sorry to add, that *we ourselves* have not "learned" that this is the case; and we think it would have been better, if Phileleutherius had given us the downfall of Priestcraft, in the prophetic language of his Destiny, in conclusion; and represented Destiny as appearing only in the final scene. Doubtless, Priestcraft has considerably less power now, than she had some centuries ago; but she still reigns and tyrannizes in the earth; and she finds beings weak and despicable enough to cringe to her power. Not to mention the church of Rome, in which there is any thing but liberty of conscience—look to the church of England, and to the church of Calvin, and the church of Wesley! What do we see there, but innumerable instances of priestly domination on the one hand, and passive mental slavery on the other? We say, "innumerable instances;" because all are not priests who are ministers, and all are not slaves who listen to ministerial instruction. But we are afraid, that this admission cannot be made in favor of the majority. And why do ministers so generally—even Unitarian ministers as well as the rest, imitate the fashionable world? The ministry is a genteel profession, and ministers must make an appearance; and yet they teach their hearers, to despise "the pomps and vanities of this wicked world!" Verily, we think this savours something of priestcraft; and we must continue to think so, until we see ministers more remarkable for simplicity in the manner of their living.

(To be continued.)

Questions to those who maintain the Deity of Jesus Christ.

IF Jesus Christ be the self-existent and eternal God, as Trinitarians assert, who censure and condemn Unitarians for denying his Deity; it must follow, that whatever is recorded in the New Testament concerning Jesus Christ must be true of the

self-existent and eternal God; and the names Jesus, Christ, and God, can only be different names of the same being. If on the other hand, the things recorded concerning Jesus Christ are not and cannot be true of, nor applicable to, the self-existent and eternal God, it must follow that Jesus Christ, to whom they are applicable, and of whom they are strictly true, cannot be the self-existent and eternal God. It is quite reasonable that the advocates for the Deity of Jesus Christ should be required to answer the following questions; and if they cannot answer them in the affirmative, they ought no longer to censure and condemn those who deny his Deity; but rather to suspect that themselves are in error. The questions are put in verse that they may the more easily be committed to memory, and in very plain language because designed for the common people.

YE Christians say, could God be born?
A manger be Jehovah's bed?
Could he be houseless, poor, forlorn,
And at a woman's breast be fed?

Could he who fills th' eternal throne
A frail and mortal parent know?
The infinite, all-perfect One,
From infancy to manhood grow?

Could God feel hunger and distress?
Wrought he at a mechanic trade,
In traveling felt he weariness,
Who heav'n and earth and all things made?

Could God be to himself a son?
The father of himself was he?
The Christ, his own anointed one?
Could he the sent and sender be?

Could the great Sov'reign Lord of all,
Be subject to another's will?
On him for strength and succour call,
And his divine commands fulfil?

Could God, who life and all things gave,
Of whom and for whom all things are,
Wisdom and pow'r and grace receive?
Another's name and truth declare?

Could mortal hands arrest and bind,
Th' eternal the immortal King?
Th' Almighty one by them confined,
A pris'ner to their judges bring?

Did they at Pilate's bar arraign
 Th' invisible whom none can see?
 Whose hands the universe sustain
 Condemn, and nail him to a tree?

Could God supreme and ever bless'd
 Prostrate on earth in anguish lie,
 While tears and blood his grief express'd,
 And prayers and cries to God Most High?

Could God, a Spirit, bleed and groan?
 The living God on Calv'ry die?
 The self-existent changeless one,
 Expire in grief and agony?

Was he a pris'ner in the tomb,
 Whom heav'n of heav'ns cannot contain?
 What grave on earth would furnish room,
 Where such a prisoner might have lain?

If God expired who then could live?
 Who God again to life could raise?
 From whom could creatures life receive,
 If God lay dead some nights and days?

Since all acknowledge God is one,
 Why still assert that God is three?
 The Father's God, Christ is his Son;
 If Son of God, God can he be?

Ye who assert that Christ is God,
 Answer these questions if you can;
 If not, believe the sacred word,
 That Christ is an exalted man.

R. W.

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

BUCKMINSTER'S SERMONS.

The following Extracts are from Sermons by the late Rev. J. S. Buckminster; now in the press, republishing in England. The character of Jesus is the subject of the Sermon from which these Extracts are taken.

IN order that you may feel the argument, which I wish now to set before you, let me transport you back to Judea, and place you in the audience that were listening to the discourses of our

Saviour, recorded in that chapter of St. John from which our text is taken. (John vii. 46.)

The pharisees and chief priests, enraged at the boldness of our Saviour's discourses, and jealous of the attention which he appeared to excite, orders some of their officers to apprehend him. The officers go forth determined, as we may suppose, to obey their superiors, as usual. They advance toward the Son of God, then in the midst of his discourse. They behold a man standing in all the conscious dignity of independent virtue, full of grave and impressive wisdom, which he delivers and enforces with the authority of divine power. As they approach, no secret anxiety betrays itself in his countenance, in his manner they discover none of the reserve and cunning of imposture, no arts to gain attention, no solicitude to provoke wonder or catch applause, none of the extravagancies of the head of a sect, no absurdities, and no symptoms of concern for family interest, or personal fame. All about Jesus of Nazareth, is as fair, and grand, and unaffected, as the sun in his course through a cloudless sky. He appears to be the delegate of Him, who sits at the head of the creation, proposing messages of love and expressing in his own manner, the benevolent designs of his Father in heaven towards this perverse nation. They behold him affectionate in his address, sublime in his conceptions, yet fearless in his manner, meekly conscious that God was with him, and that his unbelieving hearers were a wicked and cruel race, who would bring upon themselves the vengeance of the Most High, whose prophet they rejected.

The rude officers are arrested at the sight of this inexplicable dignity, and an unaccountable awe spreads itself over their consciences. They feel, as if they were about to lay unhallowed hands on the Son of God, or the inhabitant of some other world. They stand at a distance, dwelling on his looks and language, fixed in amazement. They return to their employers without their prey. Why have ye not brought him? say the impatient priests. Never man spake like this man, was all their reply. And who is this wonderful teacher, my friends? The son of the humble Mary of the village of Nazareth.

The Consistency of the Character of Jesus; (from the same.)

To understand this, you must follow him, from the commencement of his ministry through the various changes of his life. There is, throughout, the same devotedness to God, compassion for human misery, contempt of malediction, meekness, self denial, grandeur and solemn tranquility. He is the same great and gracious being, when driven in fury from his native city, and when carried in triumph by the people; when giving his disciples his last adieu in private, and when surrendered by the baseness of a disciple to the violence of the rulers and the tumult of the people; when expiring on the cross, and when risen in all the plenitude of his power and glory. The great object of his life, and sufferings, and exaltation, seems never to have been absent from his mind. Not a syllable escapes him, in the most difficult and trying crisis of his life, unworthy of the majesty of the Son of God, or of the tenderness of one, who felt all our infirmities, and learned obedience by the things which he suffered.

The more we think of this subject the more astonishing we shall find it, and the more difficult to preserve the consistency we have mentioned. Here is a wonderful contrast of powers—divine greatness and moral debility, ingnominy and glory, suffering and triumph, the servant of all and the Lord of all, Jesus expiring and Jesus risen and triumphant. Who would undertake, without any adequate prototype, to describe a consistent character out of these incongruous elements? Who could advance a step in such a narrative without previous instruction?

Think how difficult it is to preserve, for any length of time, the consistency of a common fictitious delineation. Suppose the character is taken from the walks of every-day life, to make a natural portrait is a mark of considerable talent. But when the character is extraordinary, beyond the grasp of common minds, when the events are mighty and unexampled, and especially where supernatural agency makes a part of the narration, then the preservation of consistency discovers wonderful superiority of invention. Great geniuses have often attempted this and failed.

Now when you add to this, that the history of Jesus is the work not of one writer, but of four, and three of these obscure and illiterate, and one of them confessedly writing from the testimony of various witnesses; when you consider that each of them contributes different portions of the history, and yet that they produce such an harmonious whole, as the character of Jesus Christ; if you suppose that they did not copy, and minutely too, from a real original, that they did not make use of undeniable facts, the work rises into a miracle of human genius. It is impossible, utterly impossible, in the nature of the human mind, that any thing but truth should have furnished the materials, the substance of the evangelical narrative. If you deny, or doubt this, you have a moral phenomenon, and an historical difficulty more accountable, more prodigious, more incredible, than all the miracles of the gospel, and at the same time utterly useless and absurdly anomalous; and he who chooses this side of the alternative, knows not what he doth, nor whereof he affirmeth.

What we have said on these four points, the unexpectedness, originality, sublimity and consistency of the delineation is enough, we hope, to satisfy any man, who will meditate on the subject, that this is a real picture; and if Jesus Christ really existed, as the evangelists have drawn him, I leave you to judge of the truth of that declaration at the commencement of his ministry, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.

John Adams's Letter on Intemperance.

A new weekly paper has made its appearance in Boston, for the laudable object of aiding in the suppression of the brutal vice of *intemperance*. The first number contains the following letter from the Sage of Quincy. (*Christian Inquirer.*)

Quincy, Feb. 21st, 1819.

“DEAR SIR—I thank you for your address to the New Bedford auxiliary society for the suppression of intemperance, which I have read with pleasure and edification; it is elegant and pathetic; it is pious and virtuous; it addresses itself to the understanding and the heart.

A drunkard is the most selfish being in the universe. He has no sense of modesty, shame, or disgrace. He has no sense of duty, or sympathy of affection with his father or mother, his brother or sister, his friend or neighbour, his wife or children; no reverence to his God; no sense of futurity in this world or the other—all is swallowed up in the mad, selfish joy of the moment.

Is it not humiliating, that Mahometans and Hindoos should put to shame the whole Christian world, by their superior examples of temperance?

Is it not degrading to Englishmen and Americans, that they are so infinitely exceeded by the French in this cardinal virtue? And is it not mortifying beyond all expression, that we Americans should exceed all other eight millions of people on the globe, as I verily believe we do, in this degrading, beastly vice of intemperance.

I am, Sir, your obliged friend and humble servant,

JOHN ADAMS.

UNITARIANISM IN AMERICA.

The prosperity of the great cause of pure christianity is regarded by us with no small degree of pleasure. We hail its progress in America as the prelude of a day great and glorious; and the earnest of its spread over the Southern part of the Western world, when the Provinces of South America from their intercourse with those of the North shall be one with them in the common faith which distinguished the first Christians.

MAY 5th, 1826. at eleven o'clock the ceremony of laying the Corner Stone, of the new church of the First American Congregational Society took place. The services were highly interesting. The Rev. Mr. Brazer, made a most impressive and appropriate prayer, characterized by his peculiar felicity of thought and expression. An address with which we are permitted to enrich our columns, was then delivered by the Rev. Mr. Upham. This beautiful performance will best speak for itself, although it

will lose much of the force which was derived from the very eloquent manner in which it was delivered.

During the delivery of the address, a silver plate was deposited under the stone by the venerable Peter Lander, the oldest member of the Society, the inscriptions on which were previously read by the venerable Timothy Pickering, one of the society. The corner stone was then laid, and the address concluded. The benediction, by Mr. Upham, concluded the services.

A large concourse attended the ceremony, among whom were the venerable Dr. Holyoke, now almost 98 years of age, and Stephen Higginson, Jun. Esq. a lineal descendant of the first pastor.

The direct descendants of Gov. Endicott, and the pious and eloquent Higginson, the first pastor, are now members of this religious society.

ADDRESS

Delivered at the Laying of a Corner Stone of a new Meeting House of the First Church in Salem.

My Christian Friends and Brethren—We have assembled here to perform a service, simple in itself, but leading to associations which are dear to the heart, and sink deep into the mind. We are now to consecrate the foundation of a Christian Temple, and to place beneath this, its corner stone, a brief inscription to the Great Almighty Being to whom we dedicate it. In performing this service we do not only follow a custom prevalent among us, but we do what is recognised to be a duty and is prompted by our feelings.

That it is our duty, we are convinced by the consideration of a single circumstance. When the venerable building which last stood on this consecrated spot was removed, with what solicitous curiosity did we examine its foundation, in the desire of discovering some inscription placed there by men who lived four generations before us, concealed for more than a century from all eyes until ours should fall upon it! Our hope did not wholly leave us until the last corner had been taken away, and the disappointment which we then suffered is still fresh in our minds. We will spare those of our remote posterity, to whose lot it may fall to remove this foundation, a similar disappointment. We

will endeavour to secure to them the gratification for which we have been seeking in vain.

With these views we proceed to deposit beneath this corner stone, where the light of the day will never reach it until it shines upon the demolished and scattered ruins of these solid walls, the plate upon which are engraved the inscription and notices which will now be read to you.

[Here Col. Pickering read the inscription on the Plate; the following words are engraved on one side of it:—

To the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our God and the God of our Fathers, the Descendants of Higginson, Endicott, and the other New England Pilgrims, who here gathered the first American Congregational Church, Aug. 6th, A. D. 1629; have laid this Corner Stone of the Fourth Edifice erected on this spot, for Christian Worship, April 27th, A. D. 1826, under the ministry of the Rev. John Prince, LL. D. and Rev. Charles W. Upham, Associate Pastors. *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”]*

When, after the succession, as we trust and pray, of many generations, our distant descendants, in removing this temple, time-worn and dilapidated as it then will be, shall find this memorial of our interest in them, their minds and hearts will instantly come back to us through the long interval, perhaps of centuries; they will bless our memory for having raised the altar around which their Fathers had gathered, and spread out the roof beneath which they had been sheltered in worship; and when they reflect that four edifices of wood and one of more durable materials have risen successively, and successively sunk into ruin on the same spot, but that the Gospel has been constantly preached there, they will fully recognise the sublime truth contained in that prophetic declaration of our Saviour which we have inscribed here: *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.”*

We now in the sight of God, and in the presence of all who are here assembled, devote the building, upon the foundation of which we are standing, to the accommodation and support of a community of Christian worshippers. We bid these walls to rise in the name of Higginson, Endicott, and all our honoured

and pious ancestors, the Pilgrims of New-England who here first consecrated a Christian Sanctuary on the borders of a rude ocean and a still ruder wilderness. We bid them rise in the name of that glorious company of saints and martyrs, who, in every age of the church, have toiled, and suffered, and died in the holy cause of christian truth and christian liberty. We bid them rise in the blessed name of him who is the great head of the church.

And it is our devout and fervent prayer, that on this spot for ages yet to come, the eternal and immutable principles of sacred truth and of religious duty may be proclaimed—that the cause of free but sober inquiry, and of pure, and rational, and soul-redeeming christianity, such christianity as allures the convictions of the understanding as well as the feelings of the heart, may forever be cherished and defended here—that the poor and the desolate and sorrow-stricken, may here always find peace and comfort to their souls—that a light from heaven may break through the clouds which cast their gloomy shadows over this scene of our existence, and shine down upon those who may successively come up here to catch a glimpse of that better world towards which God in his mercy is calling us. Here may affliction always be soothed—here may a lasting consolation be extended to the bereaved—here may a heavenly hope ever spring up in the bosoms of the desponding—here may a bright pathway from the spot where we stand, to the world above, be for ever kept open, along which, as in the dream of the Patriarch, pious spirits will be mounting upwards, and gracious influences passing down. And when the great shepherd shall collect into one fold in heaven his scattered flocks, may there be a long, and innumerable, and a shining train of saved and rejoicing spirits, clad in garments of light, with crowns on their heads, who will look back to the spot and to the temple which is now rising, and exclaim, “thou art blessed forever ; for to us thou hast been the gate of Heaven.”

(*Christian Inquirer.*)

Fourth Anniversary of Moor Lane, Congregation, Bolton.

In our number for May, we inserted a pretty long report of the

proceedings of the meeting of this congregation, to celebrate their fourth anniversary. A friend had forwarded to us some particulars which would have enabled us to have made that Report more complete; but it unfortunately got delayed by the person to whose care it was committed, and did not come to hand in time; and we had not room for it in our last number. We now avail ourselves of the assistance with which we have been favoured.

The Reverend J. G. Robberds in proposing the following sentiment, "Our Christian Brethren of every denomination; may they diligently investigate every religious subject, and honestly follow the conviction of their own minds," delivered a short but eloquent speech, fraught with sentiments of a truly liberal nature, he had no doubt that many ornaments to society would be found among those who differ from us in religious opinions, and that the sincere and upright among all religious denominations will be accepted by the great and good Father of all.

Mr. Isaac Barrow then spoke as follows :

Mr. President ; It gives me great pleasure in hearing such a sentiment proposed to an assembly, who are almost if not altogether composed of those, who are declared by the persons whom the sentiment recognises, to be unbelievers. Christianity is a system of love and charity, which unhappily has not yet predominated.

Bred, nurtured, and instructed in the schools of prejudice and bigotry, as many have been, the natural and humane feelings of men have been cramped and those who have ventured to think and act differently from the unthinking multitude, have been subjected to their censure and opprobrium; heaven's thunderbolts have been hurled at them—its keys violently seized to prevent their admission, and man has ascended the throne of the Eternal. But happily for us in this case, man is frail and finite, and therefore erring—he is weak, and therefore not to be dreaded—a creature, and therefore not our judge. The faith which was once delivered to the saints, which we believe to be Unitarianism, allows not such unholy feeling which so generally prevails; it demands from *its* advocates love towards its enemies;—blessings for *their* cursings—and pity, help and assistance to those who are in error.

Widely then as we may differ in our views, and the manner in which we ought to act towards the Universal Family of man, I say widely as we differ from those who would even rob us of the

name of Christian, it is nevertheless our duty to be kind and charitable towards them, as well at the festive board, and the merry hearth, as in the more solemn act of devotion to God, for by so doing we shall comply with the precepts of the gospel—display the superiority of our principles, and establish our right to the christian name. It cannot be, that ease or emolument can be the cause of the difference betwixt us and other denominations of Christians ! No. Though the traducer has sometimes, no less ignorantly than falsely asserted this ; it is much, very much the reverse. Educated, as many of us have been, in a system which had become dear to us ; connected by the ties of friendship and blood, it was no easy task to leave the beaten track of the multitude, and join the inquiring few, the few which have nothing to bestow, but what the whisperings of an approving conscience can give—the few which are every where spoken against. No. But the cause of truth demands this at our hand ; it requires that we diligently investigate every subject connected with religion—that the ties of friendship and blood—the scoffs and sneers of the bigoted should be disregarded in a matter of so great moment ; truth I say requires this at our hands. And can it then be wrong in us, to wish that our Christian Brethren of every denomination, not only in this town and neighbourhood, but throughout the world, may investigate every religious subject ? It cannot be. Christianity requires that we have the welfare of every individual of the family of man at heart—that every possible good should be done even to those who differ most from us. Not only then may they diligently investigate every religious subject, but may they honestly follow, and openly avow the convictions of their minds. May they shun with abhorrence the example of those who were convinced they were wrong, but who could not afford to keep a conscience ; of those who durst not write the truth, for fear the Church should be proved to have all along been in error—but, may they be strict imitators of Christ, who faced calumny, opposed error, and feared none—of Paul, who when he was convinced he was wrong, had the honesty to declare it and the zeal to propagate it—of a Biddle, a Firmin, a Whiston, and a Whitby, who fearlessly avowed their change of religious opinions—of a Penn and an Emlyn, who suffered in prison for conscience sake—of an Elwall, who had the courage to stand at the bar of his country to defend Christianity—of a Lindsey, an Evanson, a Disney, a Wakefield, a Stone a Maty and a Fripp, who retired from the church for conscience sake ; and of a Priestley, who bore with fortitude and magnanimity the intolerance, the riot, the malice and bigotry of his fellow townsmen ; whose house and property were destroyed, and himself and family driven from his native Country, for the cause of pure and uncorrupted truth.

To the toast wishing prosperity to the Moor Lane Congregation, Mr. J. Bradshaw made the following reply :

Sir, I rise as Secretary to the the Moor Lane Unitarian Con-

gregation, agreeably to my own feelings, and I am confident in accordance with the feelings of every member of our Congregation both present and absent, to return you our sincere thanks for the honor you have just conferred upon us. In attempting to delineate the rise and progress of this Society, though much embarrassed, yet I feel real pleasure. It was my lot to witness, though not under the most distant idea of ever becoming a member, (for at that time I was of a different faith;) their first attempt as a society to have public worship. In a *garret* in a private house, did this Society first offer up their public adorations to the one living and true God. But under these apparent inauspicious circumstances they persevered. Like the small distant purling stream which widens its way through the encircling earth, taking in the still smaller streams it meets with, it at last becomes a river, enriching the still widening banks through which it runs. So has this Society gone on with little and little, taking into its bosom from almost every sect that surrounds it, until at length it so flourished that the members thought proper to purchase their present commodious place of public worship, *the anniversary of which* ALONE whatever may be the conduct, assertions or opinions of others to the contrary, we are this day met to celebrate. When this Society first sprang into existence; Unitarianism, comparatively speaking, was but partially known. Since that period through their instrumentality it has been as it were proclaimed on the house top—by Missionary preaching—by an extensive distribution of tracts—by public Lectures—and by the Press.

Is Unitarianism a blessing? Is its promulgation beneficial to Society? Then is this Society entitled to the respect of all their brethren. That a pure and disinterested love of truth, has been this Society's only impetus, may be seen by the sacrifices they have made in the cause of truth. They sacrificed in the first three years, by public and private donations and contributions, independent of the assistance of distant friends £1500. And though the last year has not been so productive, yet under the peculiar circumstances they have labored, they have done well. Though their numbers are not so great, owing to sun-shine friends, removals, the general depression of the times, and the being without a pastor, yet I firmly believe they are on a firmer basis than ever they were. To my fellow members I will only add, go on with the same disinterested zeal you have hitherto manifested, and you must ultimately prosper. May peace be within each member's breast—unity of sentiment, or a bearing with each others opinions be our practice—that friendship which thinketh no evil of any, reign in all our hearts—and that brotherly love that feels for another's infirmities, distinguish every one of us.

The Chairman, (the Rev. W. Shepherd) in concluding his speech told the meeting that, if his life was spared and his health permitted, he would be with them on their next anniversary.

INTELLIGENCE

ON Thursday, June 22nd, the Annual Meeting of the ministers and others of the Unitarian Christian profession was held at the Chapel, in Mozley Street, Manchester. The Rev. —Ashton of Knutsford led the devotional part of the service, and the Rev. W. Tate of Chorley preached the Sermon. The text Matt. xxvii. 8, Be not ye called Rabbi, for one is your master even Christ, and all ye are brethren. The design of the preacher was to show and enforce the principles of dissent, and particularly of Unitarian dissent. The ministers and friends dined together, to the number of forty-five to fifty.

On the removal of the cloth a series of resolutions were submitted to the consideration of the meeting, and adopted. The general tendency of these resolutions was, to promote a closer union, and a more effective co-operation among the Unitarians of the two counties, and to make the Provincial meeting the medium of such union and co-operation. The old name of Provincial meeting of Presbyterian Unitarian Ministers, is to be retained; but objects of more extended usefulness are to engage their attention. The Tract Societies of Liverpool and Manchester, and the Missionary Society are to be invited to communicate the most remarkable features of their reports to the Provincial Meeting, and the meeting is to consider those means which seem best fitted to promote the interests of these societies. Other objects also contemplated to form a part of the business are, to ascertain the actual progress and real state of Unitarianism in the two counties:—the number of children educated in the various schools belonging to Unitarians—and the real state of their different congregations. It is also intended that the Provincial shall be united to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association.

We are glad to see that there is some life remaining in the Old Provincial, and that it is at last about to exert itself to some valuable ends. We could have wished this body to have been less tenacious of the *misnomer* by which it has been known for so many years. There may have been a time in her history when the term *Presbyterian* might have been proper, but the sun has long since set on that day; and retaining so improper a name by the body, is regretted by its friends and ridiculed by its enemies; the name when applied to the body is highly ridiculous.

Again we could have wished the body of Rev. brethren had gone one step further, and have followed up the advice of the preacher, in enforcing his text, and have resolved to call the Society in future, instead of Presbyterian and Unitarian Ministers, by which the people are placed out of view, the Unitarian Association for Lancashire and Cheshire; which appears to us more appropriate. We hope, as old prejudices are fast

giving way, that next year something more will be done; we are glad to see the present advancement. Z.

IN Middleton, on Sunday, June 4th was re-opened for Unitarian worship, a Chapel which had been occupied by the Methodists. Two Sermons were preached on the occasion, that in the afternoon by the Rev. J. G. Robberds, and that in the Evening by the Rev. J. R. Beard.

Middleton is one of the stations supported by the Lancashire and Cheshire Unitarian Missionary Society. The prospects which this station presents to the friends of true religion are highly gratifying. The congregation already consists of thirty families, and it supports a Sunday School of one hundred and thirty children.

The audiences were exceedingly good, in the afternoon the chapel was very well attended, and in the Evening crowded to excess. Both the services were highly interesting, and listened to with the deepest attention. Many friends attended from Manchester, who were highly delighted with the proceedings of the day.

A controversy between the Unitarians and the Calvinists has for sometime been going on in this town. Mr. Wake, a Trinitarian minister, preached against the Unitarians and aspersed their character. This occasioned a letter to be written by John Buckley a weaver, inviting Mr. W. to a conference. Mr. W. disdainfully refused. A correspondence ensued between Mr. W. John Buckley, and another weaver, Peter Cocker; subsequently the correspondence was published. On this a pamphlet was issued, as it is believed, by Mr. Wake's successor. This has met with a reply from the pen of Mr. Beard, in a pamphlet entitled "A Vindication of the Conduct of the Middleton Unitarians, and the Supreme Deity of the Father asserted."*

The committee earnestly and respectfully solicit the assistance of their friends to enable them to carry on the important work in which they are engaged. B.

THE Rev. John Cropper, A. M. of Glasgow College, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the congregation assembling in the Unitarian Meeting-house, Moor Lane, Bolton, to become pastor of that Society.

THE Rev. Henry Green, A. M. having completed the time of his engagement with the Unitarian Congregations of Newcastle under-lyne and Hanley, has signified his intention of leaving them at the end of July.

* We recommend this pamphlet to our readers, it contains as much information as is to be found in works of much larger size.—EDITOR.

For Notice to Correspondents see the last page of the Cover.

F. B. Wright, Printer.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 20. NEW SERIES. Price 4½d. AUGUST 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(From Bellamy's Bible.)

JUDGES xv. 4. 5.

And Samson went and caught three hundred foxes, and took fire-brands, and turned tail to tail, and put a fire brand in the midst between their tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks and also the standing corn, &c.

OBJECTORS have said: "This passage contradicts itself as to the possibility of the thing; for who that thinks rationally can for a moment suppose that it was possible for Samson, in so short a time, to catch three hundred foxes? But there is an insurmountable objection to this passage as it stands in the common version; viz. with regard to the execution of the plan after the foxes were caught, in order to burn the corn.

"It must appear that the foxes could not have been caught among the Philistines; for as they had the dominion over Israel, a thing of this nature would not have been allowed. And admitting he had caught them at his native place, he must have conveyed them to the country of the Philistines, who no doubt would have suspected him of doing something wrong, and would have prevented him. But had he even arrived at the place of his destination, he would have found it a very difficult, if not an impracticable thing, to have tied the tails of such a number of foxes together, with a firebrand between each tail. But after all this, he had to accomplish the most difficult part of the business: it only need to be mentioned to show the impossibility of its being done. After kindling the firebrands, he must have sent the foxes in a certain direction to the corn fields, which would have been altogether impossible in the situation the ani-

mals were put with their tails tied together, as they would have dragged each other in contrary directions." Such are the reasonings of objectors on the impossibility of the things being done which are mentioned in the text as it stands in the translations. I shall now proceed to show that all such reasonings are founded on a wrong translation of the original text, concerning which, all objectors appear to be as ignorant as the translator, Jerome the monk, the author of the Latin Vulgate, from which Latin Bible all the European translations have been made.

The Hebrew word means, handfuls, or armfuls, of any thing to which it is applied, which varies its mode of expression according to the intention of the writer; and in this passage it is evidently applied to sheaves of corn, meaning, that he took three hundred armfuls, or sheaves of corn, and turned tail to tail, and put firebrands in the midst between the tails. Plainly, that he placed the bottoms of the sheaves against each other. The reason for his thus placing them in this order is obvious; for being nothing but straw, the wheat being at the extreme ends, there was no danger of their smothering, but that they would burst out into a flame; from which it appears that there is no ground for objection, except to the translation as it stands in the common version.

He let them go into the standing corn. The translators have here given us to understand that when Samson had set fire to the brands, he let the foxes go into the standing corn, and thus set it all on fire. This error arises from the improper translation of the word, which is rendered, and let them go. But there is no authority for the words, let them; consequently this cannot refer to Samson's letting the foxes go into the corn-fields. It has the same meaning here when applied to inanimate nature, as in Exod. xxii. 8—1 Chron. xiii. 10, he put. The clause reads truly, *Which he had put in the standing corn.*

And burnt both the shocks and also the standing corn. By the word shocks it would appear that the corn was cut and put up into small stacks in the field, as is the custom. But by the words, standing corn, it would appear that the corn was yet standing uncut. But it is obvious that the standing corn was that which was standing in heaps in the fields after it was cut;

and that the word rendered by shocks, properly meaning stacks, refers to the great corn-stacks preserved in the farmer's ground, as we see in the farm-yards in our day. Heb. *And burnt the stacks, also the standing corn.*

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

In your number for May, p. 128, the following Query is proposed by *Omega* :

“Was Jesus of Nazareth born God, or did he become so at any subsequent period of his life ; or has he been raised to the rank of Deity since his resurrection from the dead?”

If your correspondent uses the term God, in the sense in which it was used by the Jews, and ancient Romans ; if he means a person of rank, of power and dignity, or official character, the answer is, that Jesus was not born to rank, &c. He was born of poor parents, his father was a carpenter living in Nazareth, and himself brought up to, and worked at the same trade ; Jesus was not then born to rank or power, and therefore the title God could not be given to him at his birth.

Among the Jews those who bore the office of priest, prophet, &c. were called gods ; but Jesus was not descended of the Jewish priesthood ; but as those were called gods among the Jews to whom the word of God came, so in this sense Jesus became a God, by the anointing which was shed upon him, constituting him the Christ of God. He was not the Christ until he was called and commissioned as the servant of the Most High God to declare his mind and will to the children of men. He is also raised to a higher rank since his resurrection from the dead ; for he is made Lord of all, head over all things to the church ; and in the highest sense which the term God can be applied to office, it belongs to Jesus the Christ of God ; he has a name given to him which is superior in dignity and power to any other of the messengers of God.

But if your Querist intends to ask, if Jesus was in his nature more than human, if he were the infinite and eternal Jehovah ? then I say he was not born God, he did not become so since his resurrection from the dead. For Jehovah is the self-existent and independent, he could not derive his being from another, he could not be born ; but Jesus was born of human parents ; consequently it would be the height of absurdity to say that he was in his nature more than a human being the son of earthly parents, the child of mortality.

Jehovah is the immutable ; what he is now he ever was ; he was always the eternal the self-existing, and will always continue so, consequently he could not become at one period what he was not at another, Jesus could not therefore be Jehovah, nor Jehovah, Jesus.

Again, Jesus is raised to his high dignity, from a state of suffering and death, as the reward of his obedience to the will of God. He could not then be God, in the sense in which the term is applied to the one supreme, because the supreme Being could not die, be exalted, rewarded, and raised to a state of dignity he did not before possess.

The conclusion, I think, is unavoidable; Jesus was not, is not, nor ever will be in the nature and constitution of his person any more than a HUMAN BEING; but he is the best beloved, the most exalted, the most dignified of all the servants of Jehovah.

I hope these brief remarks on the subject of *Omega's* question, if not satisfactory to him, may induce him and others, to think on this subject with that seriousness which its importance demands.

I remain, yours,
ALPHA.

RATIONAL DEVOTION.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

Permit me to occupy a small portion of your publication with a few words on a subject which at times has claimed my attention. I am a Unitarian of that class which possesses but little knowledge, and am a convert from a very opposite system. Nurtured in the dogmas of the English Established Church, I for a considerable length of time, rigidly professed its doctrines. and until reason dethroned bigotry and superstition, I was an advocate for legislative interference in matters of religion, and thought it no crime to wish the extirpation of that sect every where spoken against. Being at length persuaded that my religious opinions were false, I flew with avidity, as I am afraid many do, to the ranks of Infidelity, and became a professed Deist, and at length inclined towards Atheism. Political matters however brought me into an Unitarian place of worship, which I afterwards occasionally visited, and at length, with a few exceptions was brought to embrace their tenets. I have thought it necessary to make these brief observations previously to entering on the subject more particularly before us, in order that those who may differ from me, and who may controvert my

opinion, may be able to see the circumstances through which I have passed, and consequently be more willing to excuse my error, should it be deemed such.

I have said with a few exceptions I am a Unitarian; and one of those exceptions is their form of devotion. Believing as I now do in the existence of an All-wise, Powerful, and Just Being, who from chaotic confusion called all things into existence, who gave to nature its laws which will most certainly produce their effects, and under whose ordination every thing is wisely provided for, I can see no propriety whatever in Petition forming a part of Rational Devotion.

It will, I have no doubt, be admitted, that that mode of devotion is the best, which will answer all the ends betwixt man and his maker, and best remove the scruples of those whom we wish to take a part in an act of such vast importance. Now I would ask, do not many of the sneers which Deists are in the habit of casting at Worship *generally*, apply with great force to PETITION *particularly*? Often are we called to witness an invocation for almost every thing which as rational beings we think we stand in need of, and perhaps at the end of a long tautological list, a supplication is earnestly offered, that they may be withheld, if not for our benefit. Such a plan in my opinion, seems to indicate a want of knowledge in the being addressed, or ignorance and presumption in the being addressing, and reasonably exposes him to the sneers of the unbeliever. Unitarians and Unbelievers, I suppose will grant that God is immutable—that nothing that we can do will ever change him—that his knowledge is unbounded, and therefore nothing can be hid from him, he needs not to be informed of our wants—that nothing that we can offer will incline him to be favourable to that which already shares not his love; and if so, what need of petition to him, who has declared that he will withhold nothing from him who is thankful and kind. The end and design of worship of every description, is intended to operate *upon man* NOT GOD, to fit and prepare him for brighter realms—to produce in him a love to God and his laws, and a dependence upon him as his Creator and Preserver—and as a natural consequence of this, love to all mankind, a wish to help the injured—assist

the needy—strengthen the weak; and promote as far as in his power lies, the welfare of the universal family of man.

Now I would ask; is not thanksgiving for the past, with an acknowledgement of dependence for the future, independent of petition sufficient for all this? Can there be any necessity for a long string of petitions by those who acknowledge the age of miracles to have gone by—that to nature are given laws which cannot in the nature of things be changed, but will certainly produce their effects—that Providence has wisely provided for those who are dependents upon his bounty? My own opinion is, that petition is unnecessary—that thanksgiving with dependence will answer every end betwixt man and his maker, and greatly remove the scruples of those whom we wish to take part in such an act.

I am aware that it may be argued, that petition as well as every other act of religious worship is a mean to an end, and unless we ask, it indicates thoughtlessness. But every end which could possibly be gained by such a practice, would be attained by the method which I have pointed out; and that deceptive practice which our Saviour condemned of supposing we shall be heard for our much speaking, would be avoided.

To all this, it may be said, that we have the example and precepts of Christ, for Petition. But before we place any weight on the example of Christ, or even the Apostles, as far as the words go, ought we not to recollect that Christ and his Apostles were placed in circumstances which might warrant a form of worship which would be useless to us—they were under special illumination and when they saw what was necessary to work conviction on their hearers, it might be necessary to make use of the most direct petition to convince their audience that the God they preached was the Governor of the Universe, who endowed them with powers for the promulgation of the truth. And with respect to the *precept* of Christ, for petition, the most favorable is, the Sermon on the Mount, and even here, the evidence to me is slender. For our Saviour particularly advises his followers not to use vain repetition, for your Father, says he, knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask. Ask, says he, and it shall be given, seek, and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened

unto you, but by this he could not intend that our every desire would be attended to, but only that we were to seek to do the will of God in the manner which he had pointed out, and all these things, if necessary, would be given unto us. Rational devotion then, is thanksgiving to God for the past, and an acknowledgement of dependence on his bounty for the future, *independent of petition*, by those who admit his immutability, his universal government, and his wise provision for those who depend upon his unceasing bounty.

A YOUNG UNITARIAN.

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS AT WIGAN.

No. VI.

The Ability of Man to do God's Will.

THE doctrines and precepts of the gospel are set before us, as the moral means of exercising our minds, and to prove the dispositions of our hearts, whether, as dependent and accountable creatures, whether, as free and voluntary agents, we will hearken to and obey the revealed will of our Creator, Lawgiver, and King, or not; inasmuch as they exhibit to us what is infinitely worthy of universal acceptance, accompanied with such general and indefinite exhortations, invitations, and promises, as leave no room for any reasonable doubt that whosoever will, may *come and take the water of life freely.* Rev. xxii. 17.

I MUST proceed a little farther, in laying before your readers that plan of discussion which was followed up by the Unitarians, on the subject of man's ability to do and perform his Maker's will.

Our opponents will now have an opportunity of examining our arguments more coolly and dispassionately as they will be free from that high degree of excitement, created by the clamorous vociferations of so large a room full of enraged Trinitarians. Let us again then turn our attention to the point in hand. In my last it was remarked that to require of dependent, and, consequently, imperfect creatures, the perfection of a self-existent and independent being, would be to require an impossibility; and because such a requirement is inconsistent with wisdom, goodness, and justice, we know that Jehovah our God

has not, does not, cannot issue or enforce it. It would be to deny himself by contradicting his revealed character as a being of all possible perfections.

If, according to our opponents, the will of God be such as man cannot obey, I then ask, why has God revealed it? What end could he have in view, in making to man a revelation of his own will and man's duty, if he knew that man was totally incapacitated to perform it? To what purpose are we taught if we cannot act, cannot execute? Why does the finger of mercy in the scriptures point out to us the path of obedience as the road to heaven, and the voice of mercy say to us, this is the way walk ye in it, if it be not in our power to stir a single step in that way? For what end are all the commandments given, if we cannot so obey them as to please our Father in heaven, who has issued them for our observance and good? What father of our flesh could be found so unthinking as to bid his child do something which he knew to be impossible, so weak as to threaten to punish him severely if he did not perform his impossible commands, and so wicked as actually to punish him for not doing it? Is God more unreasonable and unrighteous than earthly parents? let those answer it who charge him with being so.

If man cannot do God's will why have we so many instances and examples of virtue rewarded and of vice punished? Were any punished for doing what they could not avoid? and were any rewarded for what they could not do? Why was Jesus sent to teach us God's will, and show us how to perform it, if, after all, we could not properly observe it? Why so many precepts if we cannot obey them? Of what use is the example of Jesus if that example be to us impracticable? Why did he give us an example that we might follow his steps, if his steps were such that we cannot follow them? To what purpose are all the indiscriminate invitations of the gospel. Matt. 11, 28. Come unto me all ye who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest, of what use to invite them to come, to promise them rest if they cannot come? Of some, Jesus said, ye will not come unto me that ye may have life. Now was it not in the choice of those to come of whom he said ye will not? If it were not, then why did he blame them, why censure them for not coming?

According to the statement, I cannot call it reasoning, of our opponents, sinners have no will in this business; this will appear if they will have the honesty to lay that statement, which they made in the discussions, ungarbled before the public. If sinners have no will in the affair, then why blame them for not exercising it.

In the 1 John, v. 3. the will of God is declared to be this, that we keep his commandments, and to enforce our observance of them, as well as to vindicate the nature of the requirement, it is added, and his commandments are not grievous; but they would be grievous enough, and more than enough, if we were bound on pain of damnation to perform them and had no ability so to do. That master would be accounted a most unreasonable one, who should require his servants to do as much work again, as their strength would bear; he would be deemed an unmerciful wretch, who should demand of the sick the labour of the healthy and robust; and he would be deemed a madman, who demanded great undertakings from such as had no strength at all; yet such is the conduct our opponents attribute to the merciful parent of all mankind.

Deut. xxx. 11—14. But the word, that is, the commandment, is very nigh thee in thy mouth and in thy heart; and for what purpose? Why, that thou mayest do it. Indeed the whole of this chapter supports this view, and if our opponents say this chapter refers to temporal things, they have only to make it typical of spiritual ones as they would do in any other case, and it answers my purpose; but in Rom. x. 8, 9. it is done better than they can do it, and otherwise than in controversy with us they would like to do it. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart: that is the word of faith which we preach. Well, and what is that word of faith? It is this; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shall be saved. Here are no impossible conditions.

Deut. x. 12, 13. and now, O Israel what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee but to fear him, to walk in his ways, to love him,

to serve him, to keep his commandments and statutes. Micah vi. 6—8. He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of, but to do justly, to love mercy and walk humbly with thy God? Now, could such requirements be made, such conditions be laid down by God, who knew, or rather had he known, that they could not have been answered and fulfilled?

If the scriptures had been silent on the subject, our own feelings sentiments and experience would teach us better, than that God's requirements exceed the ability of his creatures. Let me ask, does the vilest sinner find in himself an absolute inability to perform that which he neglects? Do his vilest passions deprive him of all liberty of action? No. And why are men covered with shame and confusion of face, when detected in their practices of vice? Could this be the case if they had so fair a plea in their defence, as their inability to act better, as the impracticability, the utter impossibility of doing otherwise? are those who violate the laws of their country ever forgiven, and liberated, on the ground of this plea. Suppose a notorious thief on his trial, after the fact has been proved against him, to enter on his defence in some such way as this, My lord, I have been addicted to thieving from a child, I never could be honest, I was born a rogue, I inherit the overpowering desire of possessing other men's goods from my parents, as they did their's from Adam; and it was impossible that I should have acted otherwise than I have done. Would he be acquitted on this ground? I think not; but if his defence were true, ought he not to be acquitted? and if the judge believed it, would he not acquit him?

On the principle of our opponents, that man cannot do the will of God, cannot conform his conduct to the laws of his Maker, I ask, why should the adulterer, the seducer, the thief, the murderer be ashamed? I wonder that this orthodox doctrine is not more frequently produced by criminals in their defence, and when it is considered how great must be the tendency of such a doctrine to make men bad, and bad men worse. Why may it not be urged in justice. Whatever theologians may say

of such a doctrine surely no man who has duly considered it, can ever have thoroughly believed it. But I must here pause and endeavour to conclude this topic in my next.

J. R.

Hindley, July, 15th, 1826.

REVIEW.

Mental Wanderings: or Fragments on Priestcraft and Superstition. A Tale of other Times. By Philelutherius. 12mo. p. p. 129. Liverpool, Printed. London, Teulon and Fox.

(Concluded from our last.)

WE shall now present our readers with a few extracts from this interesting work, in addition to those, which have already appeared in the course of our remarks, as specimens of the style and abilities of the Author.

The following is a description of the power of Priestcraft. pp. 28—30.

“ There is a power which once extended its empire over all nations : all the dictates of truth were perverted, all the principles of virtue were undermined, and all the liberties of mankind trampled upon by it : all the produce of the earth, the riches of the globe, the merchandise of every climate became its spoil. The souls and bodies of men, of every color, tongue and language, were brought under its yoke. It sets its imperious feet upon the necks of kings, the most powerful monarchs bowed down to it, and held their dominions as fiefs of its empire. It insinuated itself into all human constitutions, laws, and systems of government, and they became subservient to its views. It leveled its artillery against the thrones of the mighty, they tottered, they fell ; and, at its command others rose up in their stead. It sent forth its mandates, the nations trembled ; the inhabitants of the earth were sore afraid, they prostrated themselves before it and worshiped. Whom it would it slew, and whom it would it kept alive. It usurped the titles, rights, and prerogatives of Divinity, and aspired to be like the Most High. It placed itself in the temple of God, all people bowed before it ; ascribing to it the honour, and yielding to it the obedience due to the Supreme Being. Whosoever refused to submit to this usurping power, was condemned to the most excruciating tortures in this world, and consigned to endless torments, in a fiery lake, in the next.— This power is *Priestcraft*.

In the annexed extract, we have a description of the character of Priestcraft. p. p. 30—33.

“ Various have been the forms assumed by Priestcraft, in different nations and ages. Arrayed in purple and gold, its splendid rites, and pompous ceremonies, have dazzled the eyes of the gaping multitude. It has concealed its deformity by gaudy decorations, and excited admiration, when it deserved contempt, by mere pageantry ; covered with rags, it hath traversed cities and countries, barefooted, and proclaimed filthiness a proof of extraordinary purity. It has been admired for uncommon sanctity when destitute of common decency. Rolling in luxury, and rioting in palaces, it has snatched the hard earned morsel from the half starved peasant, and plundered the widow and the fatherless.

“ Pretending to have all things in heaven and earth at its disposal, it has had the meanness to employ sturdy beggars to collect alms for its emolument from those who could ill afford to give, and to gather spoil from the house of mourning. It has lifted its head in solemn temples, whose turrets pierced the clouds, and in humble buildings, without any decorations. It has shown its face and practised its arts, in the vale of obscurity ; but its chief delight hath been in the high places. Though it hath flounced in silks and lawn ; it hath, for convenience sake, sometimes appeared in a plain coat, without any trappings. It hath stood before an altar of gold, and it hath stretched forth its hands in a pulpit of wood. Though it glories in titles, it hath sometimes laid them all aside, the better to disguise its real character. Though its nature is lordly and overbearing, it has ever been a complete time-server, never failing to cringe and play the sycophant when necessary for the maintenance of its authority.

“ The names it hath assumed among Pagans, Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans, are too numerous to be here related : the attitudes into which it hath put itself, too multifarious to be reckoned up ; suffice it to say, that Priestcraft hath taught every thing but truth, practised every thing but virtue, and promoted every thing which is opposed to liberty? however diversified its forms, its leading characteristics have been the same, and so far as its influence hath extended, falsehood, vice and misery have prevailed. The truth of this description you will find substantiated by the history of many ages.”

We think there is something sublime or striking in the following description of Destiny ; though not sufficiently clear to our comprehension. But, perhaps, Destiny must necessarily

appear involved in perplexity to finite creatures. What sacredness in the mystery which hangs over its decrees! p. p. 40—43.

“At length I was roused from my reverie by a light which suddenly shone around me, and lifting up my eyes I saw a figure which excited the greatest surprise and emotion. His countenance was the most grave and majestic I had ever beheld. In one hand he held a pair of golden scales, which hung in perfect equilibrium. With the other he supported a machine, the wheels of which appeared to be innumerable, and all of them in rapid motion. In the same hand which held the scales there was a golden chain, which reached from the scales to the machine, and was fixed upon the main wheel of it; and I perceived, that by an almost imperceptible motion of the chain all the movements of the machine were produced and regulated. Fixing his eyes upon me, with such a look of authority and reproof as penetrated my soul, he said:

“I am what mortals call *Destiny*; to me they attribute all their sufferings: yet the scales of justice have never fallen from my hand; nor has one link of the golden chain, which moves all the wheels of providence, ever been broken; nor has the chain ever been for a single moment disunited from the scales of justice. I constituted the system of the universe; established the order of nature, fixed laws in the heavens and the earth, and give to every cause its proper effect: yet men call me a blind fatality. If I do not make those see who will not open their eyes, those wise who will not employ their powers in searching after wisdom, the slaves to vice and folly happy, am I therefore to be called unjust? If mortals wantonly cast away my gifts, ungratefully abuse my favors, and heedlessly rush into the jaws of destruction, is my goodness therefore to be denied! If man be ignorant, it is not because I rendered him incapable of becoming wise. If he is weak, it is not because I denied energy and power. If he is miserable, it is not because I have not supplied him with the means of happiness. If he is in bondage, I have not forged his chains. Should he perish, I am not his destroyer.

“Know, rash young man, that when thy species seek after wisdom they will become wise; when they exert themselves, they will find that I have given them strength; when they fly from misery, they will escape it; when they use the means to free themselves from bondage, their chains will fall off; when they seek aright for happiness, they will attain it. Let them no longer blame *Destiny*; but use their reason, exert their powers, improve the blessings which their Creator hath bestowed upon them, and they will be wise, virtuous, and happy; for wise, virtuous, and happy he hath destined them to be.

"Let not desponding thoughts overwhelm thy soul, despair not of the recovery of thy species from their present degraded humiliating condition. If the wretchedness of man originated in the impossibility of his becoming wiser, in a natural defectibility of his power, thou mightest well despond; but since truth unfolds for him her ample page, since he is endowed with all the powers necessary to enable him to follow the dictates of truth, and since Destiny will not fail to crown his efforts with success, when firm and persevering thou mayest yet hope."

From these extracts, and our previous remarks, a pretty correct judgment may be formed of the character of the work. For our own parts, we think that its language sometimes is not sufficiently imaginative, elevated, and ornamental. Nevertheless taking it as a whole, it displays considerable ingenuity and great propriety and force in its representations, combined with much useful instruction.

By the way, we are not certain, whether there is not a very great defect in the ministry of Priestcraft. We did not perceive in that ministry a Lord High Chancellor; perhaps, because there was no occasion for any such illustrious conscience-keeper, as her most gracious and most religious majesty, Priestcraft, had no conscience to keep. The best of all possible reasons. And it perhaps might be well, that she had no court of chancery, to add to her other instruments of torture and cruelty.

In conclusion, we would say, that we been much interested in the perusal of this work, and can cordially recommend it to our readers. We decidedly approve of such a mode of instruction. Like the parabolic, it has something tangible in it, by connecting immaterial with material things. And we should be glad to see the period arrive, when it should become more general in the religious world.

K.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

I shall be obliged to any of your correspondents who will inform me what is meant, in what is generally called the Lord's prayer, by intreating that God will not "lead us into temptation."

Yours truly,
TYRO.

THE GLEANER.

"WE CULL THE CHOICEST."

THE INQUISITION.

The abolition of the Inquisition in Lima, by the decree of the Cortes of Spain.

THE act of the Cortes of Spain which abolished the inquisition, and which during its discussion produced many excellent though over heated speeches, was published in Lima just after my imprisonment. The Señora Doña Gregoria Gainsa, lady of Col. Gainsa, informed me that she and some friends had obtained permission of the Viceroy Abascal to visit the ex-tribunal; and she invited me to accompany them on the following day, after dinner. I attended, and we went to visit the monster, as we now dared to call it. The doors of the hall being opened, many entered who were not invited, and seeing nothing in a posture of defence, the first victims to our fury were the table and chairs these were soon demolished; after which some persons laid hold of the velvet curtains of the canopy, and dragged them so forcibly, that canopy and crucifix came down with a horrid crash. The crucifix was rescued from the ruins of inquisitorial state, and its head discovered to be moveable. A ladder was found to have been secreted behind the canopy, and then the whole mystery of the mysterious image became explainable and explained:—a man was concealed on the ladder, by the curtains of the canopy, and by introducing his hand through a hole, he moved the head so as to make it nod consent, or shake dissent. In how many instances may appeal to this imposture have caused an innocent man to own himself guilty of crimes he never dreamt of! Overawed by fear, and condemned, as was believed, by a miracle, falsehood would supply the place of truth, and innocence, if timid, confess itself sinful. Every one was now exasperated with rage, and "there are yet victims in the cells," was universally murmured, "a search, a search!" was the cry, and the door leading to the interior was quickly broken through. The next

we found was called *del secreto*; the word secret stimulated curiosity, and the door was instantly burst open. It led to the archives. Here were heaped, upon shelves, papers containing the written cases of those who had been accused or tried; and here I read the name of many a friend, who little imagined that his conduct had been scrutinized by the holy tribunal, or that his name had been recorded in so awful a place.

Prohibited books in abundance were in the room, and many found future owners—To our great surprise we here met with a quantity of printed cotton handkerchiefs. These alas! had incurred the displeasure of the inquisition, because a figure of religion, holding a chalice in one hand and a cross in the other, was stamped in the centre, placed there, perhaps by some unwary manufacturer, who thought such devout insignia would ensure purchasers, but forgot the heinousness of blowing the nose, or spitting on the cross. To prevent such a crime this religious tribunal had taken the wares by wholesale, omitting to pay their value to the owner, who might consider himself fortunate in not having his shop removed to the sacred house.

Having examined every corner of this mysterious prison house, we retired in the evening taking with us books, papers, scourges, tormentors, &c., many of which were distributed at the door, particularly several pieces of the irreligious handkerchiefs. The following morning the archbishop went to the Cathedral, and declared all those persons excommunicated, *vel participantes*, who had taken and should retain in their possession any thing that had belonged to, or had been found in the ex-tribunal of the Inquisition. In consequence of this declaration many delivered up what they had taken; but with me the case was different—I kept what I had got, in defiance of *flamines infernorum* denounced by his Grace against the *renitentes* and *retinentes*.

Stevenson's South America:

PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

Of the eloquence of M. Bridaine.

Is there be extant among us, (says the Abbé Maury,) any true

traces of this ancient energetic eloquence, which is nothing else than the original voice of nature, it is among the missionaries, and in the country, where we must seek for examples.

M. Bridaine, a French missionary, was celebrated for that kind of eloquence, which not only surprised and affected the hearer for the hour, but which followed him home, and led him to reflection in solitude.

He had so fine a voice, as to render credible all the wonders which history relates of the declamation of the ancients, for he was as easily heard by ten thousand people in the open fields, as if he had spoken under the most resounding arch. In all he said, there were observable unexpected strokes of oratory, the boldest metaphors, thoughts sudden, new, and striking, all the marks of a rich imagination, some passages, sometimes even whole discourses, composed with care, and written with an equal combination of taste and animation.

The following is extracted from the introduction of the first discourse, which he delivered in the church of St. Sulpice, in Paris, 1751. The first company in the capital went out of curiosity to hear him.

Bridaine perceived among the congregation many bishops, and persons of the first rank, as well as a vast number of ecclesiastics. This sight, far from intimidating, suggested to him the following exordium, so far at least as my memory retains of a passage with which I have been always sensibly affected, and, which, perhaps, will not appear unworthy of Bossuet, or Demosthenes.

“At the sight of an auditory so new to me, methinks, my brethren, I ought only to open my mouth to solicit your favour in behalf of a poor missionary, destitute of all those talents which you require of those who speak to you about your salvation. Nevertheless, I experience, to day, a feeling very different. And, if I am cast down, suspect me of not being depressed by the wretched uneasiness occasioned by vanity, as if I were accustomed to preach myself. God forbid, that a minister of heaven should ever suppose he needed an excuse with you! for, whoever ye may be, ye are all of you sinners like myself. It is be-

fore your God and mine, that I feel myself impelled at this moment to strike my breast.

Until now, I have proclaimed the righteousness of the Most High in churches covered with thatch. I have preached the rigours of penance to the unfortunate who wanted bread. I have declared to the good inhabitants of the country the most awful truths of my religion. Unhappy man! what have I done? I have made sad the poor, the best friends of my God! I have conveyed terror and grief into those simple and honest souls, whom I ought to have pitied and consoled! It is here only where I behold the great, the rich, the oppressors of suffering humanity, or sinners daring and hardened. Ah! it is here only where the sacred word should be made to resound with all the force of its thunder; and where I should place with me in this pulpit, on the one side, death which threatens you, and on the other, my great God, who is about to judge you. I hold to-day your sentence in my hand. Tremble then in my presence, ye proud and disdainful men who hear me! The necessity of salvation, the certainty of death, the uncertainty of that hour, so terrifying to you, final impenitence, the last judgment, the small number of the elect, hell, and, above all, eternity! eternity! These are the subjects upon which I am come to discourse, and which I ought, doubtless, to have reserved for you alone. Ah! what need have I of your commendation, which perhaps, might damn me, without saving you? God is about to rouse you, while his unworthy minister speaks to you;—for I have had a long experience of his mercies. Penetrated with a detestation of your past iniquities, and shedding tears of sorrow and repentance, you will, then throw yourselves into my arms; and, by this remorse, you will prove that I am sufficiently eloquent.”

Who doth not, by this time, perceive, how much this eloquence excels the frigid and miserable pretensions of modern wit? In apologizing, so to speak, for having preached upon hell in the villages, Bridaine boldly assumes all the authority over his auditory, which belonged to his office, and prepared their hearts for the awful truths, which he intended to announce. This exordium alone gave him a right to say any thing. Many persons

still remember his sermon on eternity, and the terror which he diffused throughout the congregation, whilst blending, as was usual with him, quaint comparisons with sublime transports, he exclaimed, "What foundation, my brethren, have you for supposing your dying day at such a distance? Is it your youth?" "Yes," you answer; "I am, as yet, but twenty, but thirty—Sirs, it is not you who are twenty or thirty years old, it is death which has already advanced twenty or thirty years towards you. Observe: Eternity approaches. Do you know what this eternity is? It is a pendulum whose vibration says continually, always—ever—ever—always—always! In the mean while, a reprobate cries out, what o'clock is it? And the same voice answers, eternity."

The thundering voice of Bridaine added, on those occasions, a new energy to his eloquence; and the auditory, familiarized to his language and ideas, appeared at such times in dismay before him. The profound silence which reigned in the congregation, especially when he preached until the approach of night, was interrupted from time to time, and in a manner very perceptible, by the long and mournful sighs which proceeded, all at once, from every corner of the church where he was speaking.

Orators! ye who are wholly engrossed about your own reputation, fall at the feet of this apostolic man, and learn from a missionary, wherein true eloquence consists. The people! the people! they are the principal, and, perhaps, the best judges of talents.

Abbé Maury on Pulpit Eloquence.

The late Robert Robinson's Advice to a Young Preacher.

LET me remind you, Sir, that when you come into this place, and address this people, you are never to bring your little self with you. I repeat this again, Sir, that it may more deeply impress your memory; I say, that you are never to bring your little self with you: No, Sir, when you stand in this sacred place,

your duty is to hold up your great master to your people, in his character, in his offices, in his precepts, in his promises, and in his glory. This picture you are to hold up to the view of your hearers, while you are to stand behind it, and not so much as your little finger must be seen.

Laws of Henry V. against reading the Scriptures.

In the reign of Henry V. in a law against reading the scriptures, in English, it is enacted, "that whosoever they were that should read the scriptures in the mother tongue, should forfeit land, cattle, and goods from their heirs for ever; and they be condemned as HERETICS to God, enemies to the crown, and most arrant traitors to the whole land."—Of course such a crime was DEATH without benefit of clergy!

A Parable on the Roman Catholic Doctrine which precludes the Laity from the study of the Scriptures.

The following parable is extracted from "The answer of Robert M'Gowen, to the letter of the Rev. Dr. M'Keon, Roman Catholic Priest, of Carrick on Shannon; and to the affidavit of the Rev. B. Cullen, Roman Catholic Priest, of Lirtrin," which were printed in the Belfast News Letter, March 3rd, 1826.

"My dear friends, allow me to use a parable. There was a king, who had two provinces at a distance from his royal residence, and he sent a governor to each. He gave them both a book of the laws which they should teach the people, and by which they should govern; but one of them would not allow his people to see the book, nor allow them to hear any part, but just what he pleased. The other governor read the book of the laws daily himself, and also printed it, and allowed all his people to read it who chose, and to bring himself to account if he acted against the book of the laws. Now, my dear countrymen, which did the will of the king? and who was the best governor?"

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

Jesus the Judge of the World.

(From Ware's Discourses.)

WITH respect to the authority by which our Lord exercises the office of judge; it may be asked is it original, or is it derived? Is it his own, or does he receive it from another?

This is a question which can, of course, be answered only by the written testimony of revelation. Conjecture and reasoning upon this point are equally unprofitable and out of place. Only that word, which informs us that he holds the office, can tell us by what authority he holds it.

And here there is no deficiency of information, nor want of explicitness. Every passage to which we have referred, either directly asserts, or necessarily implies, that the authority is derived from the Father. The Father hath committed all judgment to the Son. He hath given me authority to execute judgment. He is ordained of God to be judge of quick and dead. No language can be more unambiguous than this. Words could not deny more strongly all claim on our Lord's part to an original independent authority in this particular.

But notwithstanding this, it is remarkable, that men have been sometimes ready to forget this plain language of our Lord, and be rather guided by the suggestions of their own understanding. For, they argue, it is impossible that the office of judging the world should be delegated. It is a work to which only omniscience and omnipotence are equal; and these qualifications cannot be communicated to a finite being. For which reason, they say, it is necessary that the judge should be the supreme deity himself; and hence they conclude that Jesus is himself the Almighty God.

Upon remarks of this sort we may observe, in the first place, that we have no right to say what powers God can or cannot communicate, what authority he can or cannot delegate. It is presumption in beings like us. How do we know that he may not impart to one of his creatures knowledge wide enough and

power large enough to execute righteous judgment on the human race, without making it omnipotent or omniscient? What right have we to say that one cannot receive from God authority and wisdom sufficient to rule his church of this world, without making it extend to all worlds? Why is it impossible to believe that God may commit all judgment to another?

It is hazardous to reason on this point in opposition to the plain language of revelation. Jesus Christ declares, that this authority is delegated, and refrains from all language which may imply underived wisdom, or native right. In words immediately following our text, he adds, I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of the father who sent me. Shall we suffer any notion respecting the impossibility of a judgment without independent omniscience, to contradict this decisive language?

But still further. The very circumstance which we are ready to rely upon as proving that Jesus could not execute judgment, if he possessed only delegated power; is the very circumstance assigned in the sacred volume as a reason for its being delegated. Judgment, it is sometimes affirmed, cannot be impartial and just in the hands of one of limited knowledge. Who can feel safe it is asked, to commit his eternal destiny to the decision of one who is not omniscient? Such is the wisdom of man. But not such the wisdom of God. He has seen fit to 'give' Jesus this authority. And why? For the very reason which men assign for its being impossible—'because he is the Son of man.' This is so frequently implied, that we might almost fancy it designed as a rebuke to man's presumptuous argument on the subject. 'He hath appointed a day,' says Paul, 'in which he will judge the world in righteousness—*by the man* whom he hath ordained.' He himself says my judgment is just! Why? Because my knowledge and power are infinite? because I am the eternal and unerring God? Not at all. This is what men may say; but Christ assigns a very opposite reason: 'because I seek not my own will, but the will of him who sent me.'

REASONS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP.

It is good for me to draw near to God. Psalm lxxiii. 28.

It is good—for by associating together we unite to acknowledge the great parent of the universe as the author of our being, the God of our mercies ; to bless him as our benefactor, to express our gratitude and our love to him for all his favours ; and to devote ourselves anew to his service.

It is good to meet together, to call to mind, and to remind each other, of our dependence on God for every blessing. To express our united sense of the obligations we are under to love and obey our heavenly father. When in the solemn acts of devotion, our hearts are musing on heavenly things, our bosoms filled with gratitude and love to our God, our tongues are ready to express the feelings of our hearts, and we say it is good for us to be here ; it a pleasant thing to give thanks to God, to speak forth the praises of the Most High.

It is good—because by it the social affections are cultivated and enlarged. We no longer consider ourselves as isolated beings. The mind may, at times, love in solitude to meditate on the works, the ways, and the perfections of God ; yet the christian finds it good to visit the place where the people assemble—where kindred feelings mingle—where hearts and voices unite in the delightful work of prayer and praise—where the feeble may be strengthened—the doubting confirmed—and he who was ready to halt encouraged to pursue his way, rejoicing in hope of the joy that shall hereafter be revealed.

It is good—because while we contemplate and address God as our father, we are led to regard him as the father of mankind. Feeling ourselves members of the great family of man, we become solicitous for the happiness of our brethren of mankind ; and regard it as inseparably connected with our own ; the bonds which unite us, will be drawn closer and we shall long for the time, when the whole earth shall be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah, when his name shall be one, and his praise one through the world.

POETRY

Morning Hymn.

Immortal praise to the Most High !
Who rules and reigns above the sky !
For sleep and safety through the night,
For health, and peace, and morning
light.

This day preserve from guilt and sin ;
From foes without, and foes within ;
Enrich our minds with rays of grace ;
Our footsteps lead to realms of peace.

Our fellow mortals let them share,
An equal portion of thy care ;
From sin and sorrow, guard them free ;
Increase their love for Christ and thee.

May all in love and holy fear,
Thine excellence, and name revere ;
In that day, fill with bliss their cup,
When chosen jewels thou mak'st up.

Send forth thy light, send forth thy
truth,
Thy saving health, to age and youth ;
Thro' the whole world, thy ways be
known,
To ev'ry tribe ; in ev'ry zone:

Glory in highest be to God !
Glory below from man's abode !
Peace and good-will on earth embrace
All flesh and blood of human race !

D. Y.

Evening Hymn.

Let homage due, this night arise,
To him all-great, all-good, all-wise ;
Who shields, with his protecting hand,
Th' inhabitants of every land.

Yielding to him, ourselves to keep
We lay us peaceful down to sleep ;
Wake we again, or never wake ;
Let not his mercy us forsake.

By the Most High, protected we,
Awake, asleep in safety be ;
Let pious pray'r to him ascend,
Through Christ the try'd, the stead-
fast friend.

May he, who slumbers not, nor sleeps,
All pious minds, who vigil keeps,
This night defend ; and form us still,
As Christ, obedient to his will.

Now, we are thine ; for ever thine ;
Both Soul and Body, we resign ;
Both compass, with celestial love,
Divine protection from above !

D. Y.

(Selected.)

LINES.

(By Mr. Roscoe.)

On receiving from Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, during the war, a piece of the tree under which William Penn made his treaty with the Indians, which was blown down in 1812, and the part sent converted to the purpose of an inkstand.

From clime to clime, from shore to
shore,
The war-fiend raised his hateful
yell ;
And 'midst the storms that realms de-
plore,
Penn's honour'd Tree of concord fell.

And of that Tree, that ne'er again
Shall Spring's reviving influence
know,
A relic o'er the Atlantic main
Was sent—the gift of foe to foe.

But though no more its ample shade
Wave green beneath Columbia's sky,
Though every branch be now decay'd,
And all its scatter'd leaves be dry ;

Yet 'midst this relic's sainted space,
A health-restoring flood shall spring,
In which the angel-form of Peace
May stoop to dip her dove-like wing.

So once the staff the prophet bore,
By wondering eyes again was seen
To swell with life through every pore,
To bud afresh with foliage green.

The whiter'd branch again shall grow,
'Till o'er the earth its shades extend ;
And this—the gift of foe to foe—
Become the gift of friend to friend.

Erratum in our last number, p. 157, l. 11, for " situation " read " estimation."

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

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SEPTEMBER 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(*From Burder's Oriental Customs.*)

Matt. v. 13. *If the salt has lost its savour.*

OUR Lord's supposition of the salt losing its savour, is illustrated by Mr. Maundrell, who tells us, (p. 162.) that in the Valley of Salt near Gebul, and about four hours journey from Aleppo, there is a small precipice occasioned by the continual taking away of the salt. " In this," says he, " you may see how the veins of it lie. I broke a piece of it, of which the part that was exposed to the rain, sun, and air, though it had the sparks and particles of salt, yet had perfectly lost its savour. The innermost, which had been connected to the rock, retained its savour, as I found by proof."

Matt. v. 24. *Leave thy gift before the altar.*

This delay was unusual in gifts offered at the altar in such a cause. The oblation of a sacrifice presented even at the altar, has indeed been delayed, and the sacrifice rejected, for at that time it might be discovered that the beast had a blemish, or was on some account, an improper sacrifice, ; or the person himself, who came to make the offering, might through uncleanness, or some other cause, be disqualified for the present. But among all these things, we do not meet with this concerning which Christ speaks in this passage, so that he seems to enjoin a new matter : and, as the offended brother might perhaps be absent in the furthest parts of the land of Israel, and could not be spoken to for some time, it may appear an impossible thing which is

commanded. What is to become of the beast, in the mean time, which is left at the altar? To obviate this difficulty, it is answered, that it was a custom and a law among the Jews, that the sacrifices of particular men should not immediately, as soon as they were due, be brought to the altar, but that they should be reserved to the feast next following, whatsoever that were, whether the passover, or pentecost, or tabernacles, and be then offered. At those times all the Israelites were present, and any brother, against whom one had sinned, was not far off from the altar. To this time and custom of the nation it is probable that Christ might allude. (*See Lightfoot, vol. ii. p. 143,*)

Matt. xi. 16. But whereunto shall I liken this generation? it is like children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows.

It was the custom of children among the Jews, in their sports to imitate what they saw done by others upon great occasions, and particularly the customs in festivities, wherein the musician beginning a tune with his instrument, the company danced to his pipe. So also in funerals, where the women beginning the mournful song, (as the *præficæ* of the Romans) the rest followed lamenting and beating their breasts. These things the children acted and personated in the streets in play, and the rest not following their leader as usual, gave occasion to this speech, *we have piped unto you and ye have not danced, we have mourned and ye have not lamented.*

Matt. xxi. 21. Ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed.

It was a common saying among the Jews, when they intended to commend any one of their doctors for his dexterity in solving difficult questions, that *he was a rooter up of mountains.* In allusion to this adage Christ tells his disciples, that, *if they had faith, they might say to a mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it should be done;* that is, in confirmation of the christian faith, they should be able to do the

most difficult things. As these words are not to be taken in a literal sense, so they are likewise to be restrained to the age of miracles, and to the apostles, since experience convinces us, that this is no ordinary and standing gift belonging to the church.

(See *Whitby in loc.*)

RATIONAL DEVOTION.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

Your readers, I should imagine, must have admired the candour displayed in the letter (p. p. 180—183.) of your young Unitarian correspondent; and this meed of praise will readily be awarded him by all who are alive to the influence of so pleasing a virtue. He is not however, in my opinion, so fortunate, with respect to correctness of argument; and as I think the view which he takes of the subject, is calculated rather to chill, than to encourage, devotional feelings, I would beg leave to offer a few remarks on his communication.

It is sufficient for me, and I should think, must be so for your correspondent, after a little reflection, that Jesus Christ has directed us to use petition in our devotional exercises. I ask no more, than that the teacher sent from God, has taught us to adopt this form, in our addresses to the throne of grace. I want no further satisfaction, than the express words of him, who is “the way, the truth, and the life;” “to whom the spirit was not given by measure;” and who spake and acted as his heavenly Father directed him. It must be right, if he has said so; and when acting agreeably to his instructions, I feel the fullest assurance, that I am doing what is rational and good.

That God is an immutable Being, must be readily admitted; but, perhaps, we are too apt to entertain erroneous notions of his immutability. He is immutable, not as he is an inactive motionless Being, but as he always acts on the same principles of wis-

dom, justice, and benevolence. He communicates his spiritual blessings only through the medium of devotion. Man, who was once a sinner, lifts up his soul to him in penitence, gratitude, love, adoration, and ardent aspirations after perfection; and his mind gradually becomes enriched with the graces of piety and holiness. But God is the same, both before and after this remarkable transformation of character. No change takes place in him; it takes place only in man. Whether he forgives on repentance, or punishes in consequence of disobedience; or whether he withholds his spiritual blessings when we do not ask for them, or gives us them when we do,—he is still immutable in his purposes—he is still unchanged and unchanging in his character.

Besides, if the argument of the young Unitarian be good for any thing, it is good for too much. If it be not rational to offer up petitions to God, because he *knows* what things we have need of before we ask him, it is not rational to present our thanksgivings to him, because he *knows* we are thankful before we thank him; it is not rational to express our dependence, because he *knows* we are dependent before we give birth to such a sentiment; and it is not rational to adore and praise him, because he *knows* we do so before we engage in such exercises. Thus, the argument of the young Unitarian would set aside devotion altogether. For if, as he says, (p. 181.) “God needs not be informed of our wants,” and therefore, (p. 182.) “petition is unnecessary” “he needs not be informed” of any devotional sentiment that exists in the breast; and, consequently, devotion altogether is unnecessary. And without devotion, where is religion? where is piety? where is intercourse between God and man?

I was somewhat startled at the assertion, (p. 182.) that we are not to “place any weight on the example of Christ, or even the apostles, as far as words go,” because they were in different “circumstances” from those in which we are placed. The fact is, those “circumstances” would have superseded the necessity of petition, if any thing would. But Christ and his apostles did not think so; and therefore, their example has all the force that example can possess.

Again: if they, with their superior advantages, thought petition necessary, it must be necessary to us, who are not distinguished by such extraordinary powers.

And further; if, when "under special illumination," (p. 182.) they adopted such a form of address, it must be right; or we conclude, that that "special illumination" must have led them wrong.

It is a mistaken idea to suppose, (p. 182.) that they "made use of the most direct petition to convince their audience that the God they preached was the Governor of the Universe, who endowed them with powers for the promulgation of truth." For we find them using this form, when no such design could possibly exist; when they were in private, and could have no "audience" to "convince." Our Saviour's prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, (Matt. xxvi. 36—44.) with a single exception, is petitionary. His beautiful prayer in the 17th chapter of John's gospel, is nearly throughout of the same character. And such also is the prayer of the Apostles, in the 4th chapter of Acts, from the 23rd verse to the 30th.

But they have taught us by precept, as well as by example; and if their words are to have any authority with us, it is perfectly right, to adopt the form of petition in our addresses to the Almighty. It is not necessary to adduce instances in proof of this; they are scattered through the New Testament; and must be familiar to every one who is acquainted with the records of his holy religion.

It may be well, however, to notice the remark of your correspondent, (p. 182.) that "the most favourable precept of Christ for petition," contained in the Sermon on the Mount, "is to him slender evidence." I was astonished, I must confess, when I read such an expression. If plain and positive declarations are "slender evidence," then I know not where we shall find any evidence in the whole range of human affairs. Our Saviour is, in this Sermon, directing his disciples how to pray aright, and he is cautioning them against every thing that is improper in prayer;—and he says, "After this manner therefore pray ye; Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy

kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil ; For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." Now, this prayer is decidedly a petitionary prayer ; and if we have not here plain and positive evidence for the use of petition in prayer, then I must confess I know not what evidence is.

And what are we to understand by the words, "*Ask* and it shall be given you ; seek and ye shall find : knock and it shall be opened unto you." And also, " If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *how much more* shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that *ask* him." If petition be not taught here, I am at a loss to conceive how it could possibly be taught at all. We are plainly told, that we are to *ask*, if we would *receive* ; and to prevent the possibility of misunderstanding, a parallel is drawn between the conduct of earthly parents to their children, and our heavenly parent to us, his offspring.

But we may " expose ourselves to the sneers of the Unbeliever." (p. 181.) Well, if he will sneer, we cannot help it. But is he to laugh us out of our obedience to Christ ? Is he superior to Christ ? Is he wiser and better than Christ ? And can he teach us a more rational and beautiful system of religion ?

Besides, if filial piety in children to their earthly parents be pleasing ; is it not equally pleasing when manifested by rational creatures to their heavenly parent ? If it be reasonable in the one instance, is it not equally reasonable in the other ? Is not he who is capable of doing the greatest thing, capable of doing the least ? In short, and to repeat the words of Jesus Christ on the subject, and which can hardly be too often repeated, " If ye, (men) being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, *HOW MUCH MORE* shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that *ASK* him ? "

Your correspondent says, (p. 181.) that " with a few exceptions he is a Unitarian ; and one of these exceptions is their form of devotion ; " meaning the *petitionary* form. But I fear, he is

too much a Unitarian on this point ; that is, that there are many who entertain the same cold philosophy on the subject as himself ; or rather, " philosophy falsely so called." They have philosophized and philosophized, until they have nearly banished devotion from among them. There is scarcely any appearance of it remaining, except on the Sunday, and in the Meeting House. The domestic circle, in a great number of instances, is, I fear, entirely a stranger to it. This is much to be regretted. It has a most chilling tendency on Trinitarians, and converts from Trinitarianism, and presents a sad example to all around. " Unitarians are a prayerless people !" exclaim the more serious of the Orthodox party. And they hence draw an inference to the prejudice of our cause. " How can they possess the truth of God, when they have no godliness ? " I know they frequently argue in this way, and I have often lamented it ; but appearances, it must be confessed, are but too much calculated to lead them to do so. Unitarians are either wanting of piety, or they are afraid to appear pious ; or, perhaps, they are careless on the subject.

" Search us, O God, and know our hearts : try us, and know our thoughts : and see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting." A UNITARIAN CONVERT.

P. S. In reply to your correspondent Tyro, I would beg leave to suggest, whether the word *temptation* may not mean *trial*, and the clause be of a similar signification to the prayer of our Saviour in the garden ;—" O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me : nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." The word *temptation* is frequently put for *trial*, and the word *evil* for *affliction* or *distress*.

Or the clause may be elliptical, like others in the prayer ; that is, may imply words which are left out. Thus, " Hallowed be thy name : "—may thy name be hallowed. " Thy kingdom come : "—may thy kingdom come. " Thy will be done : "—may thy will be done. And thus of the clause in question. " Lead us not into temptation : " may we not be led into temptation.

The Cottage Bible has the following exposition of the words. "Does not St. James (ch. 1. 13.) forbid us to ascribe to God any of our temptations? He does; yet there is a sense in which he may lead us into such trials, and that for wise and holy ends. Abraham was led into temptation, when God required him to offer up his son. Job was led into temptation, when God permitted Satan to try him with losses and disease. And Jesus himself was "led into the wilderness, to be tempted of the devil." In all these cases, the Providence of God permitted the evil, and the Spirit of God supported the sufferers under it. But as these were extraordinary cases, and we are of ourselves unable to sustain the trial, we are taught to pray, that God will be pleased to preserve us from such temptations, or in any wise from falling under them."

Bishop Clagget, in his Discourse on this clause of the Lord's Prayer, considers the word temptation, as signifying trials, which prove the sincerity of good men; and he says, "What makes me think the word temptation ought here to be thus interpreted, is, that I find when it is applied to God as tempting men, it always means some extraordinary trial of them, &c." Warner's Divinty. Vol. ii. Dis. LX. page 360.

Wakefield also appears to have understood the word as meaning trial, as he has rendered it so in his Translation. But in the Improved Version, it is retained as it stands in the Received or Common Version.

The above, I hope, will remove, or will lead to the removal of the difficulty under which Tyro appears to labour.

A. U. C.

THE CONTRAST.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

If you think the following extracts will have a tendency to awaken the attention of persons attending the Church of England, to a sense of the inconsistencies, and unscriptural doc-

trines contained in the Book of Common Prayer; or in any way to promote the cause of inquiry, and the spread of truth, the insertion of them in the Reflector will be esteemed a favour, by your constant reader,

Whitchurch, August 2, 1826.

J. F.

EXTRACTS from Scripture and the Book of Common Prayer, proving their complete variance with each other, and shewing the necessity of a thorough reform in the doctrines of the Church of England.

I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.—*Revelation of John.*

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.—VI, *Article of Religion.*

Holy Scriptures declares,

Gal. iii. 20. God is *one*.

Isa. xlv. 22. There is no God else beside me, xlv. 9. I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.

The words of Scripture are,

John xvii. 1—3. Father, this is life eternal, that they might know *thee* the ONLL TRUE GOD.

Mark xii. 23. There is one God, and there is *none other* but HE.

Scripture testifieth,

1 Cor. viii. 6. To us there is but one God *the Father*. Eph. iv. 6. One God, and *Father of all*.

2 Kings xix. 15. Thou art God even *thou alone*. Psalm lxxxvi. 10. Thou art God *alone*.

1 Chron. xvii. 20. O Lord,

The book of Common Prayer declares,

In the Unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

The words of the book of common prayer affirms,

Who art one God, one Lord, not one only person, but *three persons* in one substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.

The book of common prayer affirms,

The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.

there is none like thee, neither is there any God *beside thee*.

Scripture saith,

Psalm lxxxiii. 18. That men may know that *thou* whose NAME ALONE is Jehovah, art the Most High.

Zech. xiv. 9. The Lord shall be King over all the earth; in that day there shall be one Lord and his NAME ONE.

Scripture affirms,

Deut. xxxii. I, even I, am he and there is no God *with me*.

The language of scripture is,

John iv. 24. God is a spirit. Luke xxiv. 39. Handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.

The language of Scripture is,

John iv. 23. The hour cometh and now is when the true worshippers shall *worship the FATHER*.

Luke iv. 8. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God; and HIM ONLY shalt thou serve.

Eph. iii. 14. I bow my knees unto the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture saith,

Deut. xxxii. 40. I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. Psalm lxi. 2. Even from everlasting to everlasting *thou art God*.

The language of scripture is,

1 Tim i. 17. The King Eternal. Isa. lvii 15. The high

The book of common prayer saith,

The Godhead of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is all one, the glory equal the majesty co-eternal.

The book of common prayer, says,

Jesus Christ, who *with Thee* and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth one God, world without end.

The book of common prayer, testifies,

What we believe of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and the same of the Holy Ghost. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.

The book of common prayer, declares,

The Catholic Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity in Unity; neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance, so that in all things, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

The book of common prayer, saith,

The Son which is the word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God.

The Athanasian Creed declares,

The Father eternal, the Son

and lofty ONE who inhabiteth eternity.

The declaration of the Almighty is,

Isa. xl. 8. I am the LORD, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.

Scripture saith.

Romans xi. 36. To whom be glory for ever, xvi. 27. To God only, wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Eph. v. 20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God, even the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The voice of Scripture proclaims,

1 Cor. viii. 6. One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things. Acts ii. 36. God hath made that same Jesus, both Lord and Christ.

The Almighty asks,

Isa. xl. 25. To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the HOLY ONE.

The Language of Jesus and Paul is.

John xiv. 28. My Father is greater than I.

1 Cor. ii. 3. The head of Christ is God.

Christ positively declares,

John v. 19. 30. The Son can do nothing of himself. I can of mine ownself do nothing.

eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal.

The book of common prayer, rejoins,

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.

The book of common prayer, says,

That which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and the same of the Holy Ghost without any difference or inequality. Deliver us through the satisfaction of thy Son our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost be honour and glory world without end.

The Athanasian Creed affirms.

The Father is Lord, the Son is Lord, and the Holy Ghost is Lord.

The Athanasian Creed answers,

The Son is "equal to the Father as touching his Godhead."

The famous compiler of the Athanasian Creed, declares,

In this Trinity none is afore or after another; none is greater or less than another.

The book of common prayer declares,

The Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, (*) and the Holy Ghost Almighty.

(*) Yet he positively affirms "he could do nothing of himself."

Christ says.

Mark xiii. 32. But of that day, and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven *neither the Son*, but the FATHER, Matt. xix. 17. Why callest thou me good, there is none good but *one* that is God.

The belief of the New Testament writers was,

John vi. 69. We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

The faith of the apostles was,

Matt. xvi. 16. Simon Peter answered and said thou art the Christ the *Son* of the living God.

John xx. 31. These are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ the *Son* of God.

The New Testament declares,

Romans x. 9. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*.

The exhortation of Scripture is,

Matt. vi. 6, 9. When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door *pray to thy Father* which is in secret.

After this manner therefore pray ye, *Our Father*, which art in heaven, &c. &c.

It is most positively affirmed in the book of common prayer,

Such as the Father is, such is the Son, (*) and such is the Holy Ghost. The glory equal the Majesty co-eternal.

The Believers in the book of common prayer exclaim,

We believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man.

The book of common prayer, declares,

The right Faith is, that we believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man. Perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting—God of God, light of light, very God of very God.

The Athanasian Creed declares,

He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of (believe in) the Trinity. This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully *he cannot be saved*.

The Believers in the book of common prayer, pray,

By the mystery of thy Holy incarnation; by thy holy NATIVITY and *circumcision*, by thy BAPTISM, FASTING, and TEMPTATION. Good Lord deliver us. By thine AGONY and BLOODY SWEAT, by thy *cross and passion*, by thy pre-

(*) Christ absolutely declares, the Father only know, when the day of judgment would take place.

Acts i. 24. And they prayed and said, *thou* Lord (Jehovah) which knoweth the hearts of all men, &c.

Christ forbids prayer to be made to him.

John xvi. 23. In what day ye shall ask *ME nothing*, verily verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name *he* will give it you.

Rev. xxii. 8. 9. And I John, when I had heard and seen, fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which had shewn me these things, then said he unto me, *see thou do it not*: for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book, *worship God*.

Scripture saith concerning Christ,

Heb. ii. 17. Wherefore in *all things* it behoved him to be made *like (*) unto his brethren*.

Scripture affirms,

1 Tim. ii. 5. There is one God and one mediator between God and man the *Man* Christ Jesus.

The testimony of Scripture is,

Isa. xliii. 25. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions *for mine own sake*, and will not remember thy sins.

* This passage appears to me so strong and decisive, that I think were it duly attended to, it would set the doctrine of the two natures of Christ for ever at

cious DEATH and BURIAL, by thy glorious *resurrection* and *ascension* and by the coming of the Holy Ghost. Good Lord deliver us.

The book of common prayer says,

O Lord Jesus Christ who at thy first coming didst send thy messenger to prepare thy way before thee, (*) grant that the ministers and stewards of thy mysteries may likewise so prepare and make ready thy way, by turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; that at thy second coming to judge the world, we may be found an acceptable people in thy sight, who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

Second Article of Religion declares,

Two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the God-head, and Manhood were joined together in one person, never to be divided. Whereof is one Christ, very God and very man.

Article 7 of the book of common prayer, affirms,

Christ, who is the only mediator between God and man, being both God and man.

Fifteenth article of religion declares.

Christ, came to be a Lamb without spot, who by sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the sins of the world.

(*) This prayer is directed to Jesus Christ alone; without either Father or Holy Ghost.

It is recorded in Scripture,

Luke xviii. 13. And the Publican standing afar off, would not so much as lift up eyes to heaven, but smote upon his breast saying, *God be merciful unto me a sinner.*

The language of Scripture is,

1 John iii. 7. Let no man deceive you; he that *doeth righteousness* is righteous.

Acts xvi. 35. In every nation he that feareth him and *worketh* righteousness is accepted of him. James ii. 17, 24, 26. Faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone. Ye see then how that by *works* a man is *justified* and *not* by faith only.—For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Scripture testifieth,

2 Cor. v. 18, 19, 20. All things are of God, who hath reconciled *us to himself* by Jesus Christ—God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. We pray you in Christ's stead *be ye* reconciled to God.

The exhortation of scripture to sinners, is,

Ezek. xviii. 30, 31, 32. Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby

rest. The question to be decided amounts to no more than this. Christ possessed the human nature only; or men possess both the divine and human—Else how could Christ be made in ALL THINGS LIKE unto us.

The Book of common prayer implores thus,

O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity, three persons and one God, have mercy upon us miserable sinners.

The article in the book of common prayer affirms,

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.

The book of common prayer, says,

Christ, very God, and very man, truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

Article 10. of the Church of England declares,

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power of ourselves to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, &c.

ye have transgressed, and make you a new heart and a right spirit; for why will ye die. O house of Israel, For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God. Wherefore turn yourselves and live ye.

Isa. i. 16. Make ye clean, put away from you the evil of your doings from before mine eyes, &c. Matt. iii. 8. Bring forth fruits meet for repentance. Phil. ii. 12. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

The mildness of the true christian doctrine may be seen in the annexed words.

Luke vi. 36, 37. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged. *Condemn not*, and ye shall not be condemned; forgive and ye shall be forgiven.

The Charity and mildness of the book of common prayer deserves serious attention.

This is an example.

Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary, that he hold the Catholic faith. Which faith except every man do keep whole and undefiled without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.

Thus have those Reverend Divines, in the Convocation holden in London in the Year 1562, "*Made the word of God of none effect.*"

UNITARIAN AND TRINITARIAN DISCUSSIONS

AT WIGAN.

No. VII.

The Ability of Man to do God's Will.

UPON the whole, I do not think it at all to be regretted, that this controversy has been excited in Wigan and its vicinity; we cannot doubt that it will do the Wigan Unitarians good. It is a most blessed thing in this world to be able to count a few ene-

mies, and to have one's pure mind stirred up by way of remembrance, even though it be sometimes done by way of annoyance. Truth resembles a rock in the tempestuous ocean, it may be covered for a time with the raging billows, but they soon retire, and again it raises its head triumphant and majestic.

It was my intention, if I could have done it without trespassing too much on your pages, in my last communication to have closed the article on "man's ability to do God's will." This I shall now endeavour to do.

I closed my last paper with the supposition, or in the assurance, that no man, who has duly considered the subject, can thoroughly believe man's incapacity to do his maker's will. To suppose, much more to assert, that God has laid his rational creatures under an obligation to effect impossibilities, is greatly injurious to the Deity. Did not he who gave to man his powers, both physical and moral, know the extent of them? Did he not know what would be the extent of his own requirements, and what powers would be necessary to answer them, when he created man? or will our opponents come in with their fine-spun inferential speculation of what they call inability, which, when minutely examined, amounts to a serious charge of miscalculation, or want of foresight, in the omniscient God, in not making provision for any contingencies which might arise, and which, the orthodox declare to have arisen, to derange and disorganize his work, so that none but himself could rectify it. An idea this which would be an insult to indulge respecting the meanest mechanic, who can calculate the power before he constructs his machine.

If it be the will of God, that man should obey him, (and who can doubt this) why then refuse him the power to do it? If he has denied, or does deny, him this, why require of him that which is so much beyond his power? Let our opponents reconcile this, I call upon them to reconcile this, with God's justice, equity, goodness, wisdom and benevolence. Why is the promise of eternal life made to the obedient, if obedience be impossible? Would not this be to charge the divine being, the God of truth with insincerity? Does it not look too much like what we

call duplicity, or double dealing, in man, to set forth good and then propose impossible conditions for its attainment? What earthly parent would act thus towards his child? And who can believe that God, the kind and good father of all, is capable of this?

If it be impossible for man to do God's will, why are there such numerous awful threatenings against those who do it not? Why shall that servant, (Luke xii. 47.) who knows his Lord's will and prepares not himself, and who does not according to that will, be beaten with many stripes, if his Lord knows that he cannot do it? Will sinners in the day of judgment have to say that they have only done what they could not avoid, and have neglected only that which they could not perform? Yes, if the view of our opponents be right, they will have to say this, and justly; and how can they be guilty who have such a plea? Man, say our opponents, cannot do God's will. Why cannot he? Why, say they, because he is the subject of moral inability, well; on the supposition that he is so, I ask, how is that inability to be conquered and overcome? Only, say they, by an act of supernatural power, of sovereign grace, good; and what if sovereign grace does not interfere? Why then the sinner is lost; well then, I ask again, that if his loss be in consequence of any fault, where does that fault lie, on whom is the sinner's ruin chargeable? Who does not see, that on the Calvinistic Trinitarian scheme, the damnation of the sinner is no longer of himself, but of God, of that God, of whom the scriptures declare, that he willeth not the sinner's death. Are sinners think you threatened with such awful punishments, as the scriptures denounce against the impenitent, for not doing what it was impossible for them to do, which impossibility is insisted on by yourselves?

Look into Matthew vii. 21. and learn, if the force of system will for once bind to scripture, learn that doing God's will is the gospel door of admittance into heaven, not every one that calls Christ master, master, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he, says Christ, that doeth the will of my Father. The sayings of Christ contain the will of God, the 24th verse, likens the man who heareth and doeth his sayings, to a wise man who

builds on a rock ; the 26th verse, likens him who heareth and doeth them not, to a foolish man who builds on the sand. Gal. vi. 7, 8, 9. Be not deceived God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap, &c. Without holiness, that is rectitude of conduct, well doing, no man shall see Jehovah, any other kind of holiness of which man can be the subject is not worth a straw, is of no value with man, nor in the sight of God. To this end, mark the sublime morality of the gospel. To love God with the heart, and mind, that is with the faculties we possess, to love our neighbour, that is our fellow-man, as ourselves, to love enemies ; can beneficence, be carried farther than to do good to them that hate us ? Can purity go beyond the suppression of a guilty wish ? Can patience do more than glory in tribulation ? Can confidence in God be carried farther than to give up all things to his disposal ? Can meekness and moderation exceed the suppression of the first motion of anger ? Can mortals aim at greater perfection than to imitate Christ ? Is not this to be like God ? And cannot man do these things ? then why did Christ say, learn of me ? How can he be an example to us, if we cannot tread in his steps ? Again, if it be impossible to obey the will of God, why does Christ promise happiness to such as are poor in spirit, to the meek, to such as hunger and thirst after righteousness, that is moral rectitude, to the pure, that is sincere in heart, (for the purest of the fancied elect ones are pure in no other sense,) to the merciful, to the sons of peace, and to these alone ? If no tree naturally bringeth forth good fruit, why did Christ say, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is, or shall be, hewn down ; does not this language imply that some do bear good fruit, and that such shall not be hewn down ? If man be incapable of a personal righteousness, which is acceptable and well pleasing to God, why did Christ say to his disciples, and the multitude, except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, &c. ? What was the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ? why, paying tythe of mint, annise, and cummin ; what righteousness of a personal kind exceeded that ? Why, justice, mercy, and fidelity, which the Scribes and Pharisees left undone, now to all this, and a

thousand times more of the same kind, the teaching of the apostles exactly corresponds, the burden of their instructions, is made up of the inculcation of the moral duties, which, in my humble opinion, form the most valuable and most essential part of the religion of Jesus. They taught practical piety, good works, for which the most orthodox faith is but a sorry substitute. Titus, iii. 8. This is a true saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they who have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works, these things are good and profitable unto men. These appear the only means of obtaining future happiness, and what can be more absurd than to say, or even suppose, that men may be saved without virtue? The gospel promises forgiveness to the repenting sinner, he that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy. 1 John i. 9. If we confess our sins, he, that is God, is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I know there are passages to be found which promise salvation to all who have faith, and hence it has been falsely inferred by those who like it best without works, that to be saved men need only believe, or believe only in certain dogmas, which may be found in certain creeds, catechisms, and articles of faith, which, in ancient councils, were agreed upon as the tests of faith and orthodoxy for future ages, especially those of the famous council of Nice, conducted by the Emperor Constantine and his lordly bishops; and some of which articles have, in more modern days, received the sanction of an assembly of presbyterian divines. I know not whether they have yet received the finishing touch, or what other alterations, amendations, and augmentations, they may be still destined to undergo, from more skilful or less skilful hands before the FINIS be put to them. True, I know men must believe; but they must believe as they ought, their faith must be founded on evidence, and then it will be true, sincere, and operative it will then be the faith that works, and that works by love, that purifies the heart, that overcomes the world. What can be more absurd than the doctrine of salvation by faith alone, the sufficiency of faith with-

out works? It is like saying, that it is sufficient to believe in a God of infinite perfection, and therefore not necessary to adore him—sufficient to believe in God as Creator, preserver, and benefactor, and therefore not necessary to honour and obey him, sufficient to believe that he is the giver of all good, and therefore not necessary to be the least grateful to him. Nothing can exceed this in absurdity and impiety, but the doctrine, that we shall be excused from doing our duty by believing that to be our duty which we may yet leave undone. Abstract passages are produced by our opponents from Paul's epistles, and not from Christ's sermon on the mount, or the book of Acts, to prove that men are justified by faith without the deeds of the law, by which I think Paul can only mean, that we are justified, or rendered acceptable to God by obedience to the gospel. Surely Paul does not mean, that men can be justified and saved without any attention to the deeds of the moral law; but if our opponents can prove this to be his meaning, they will afford rare encouragement to all those who already pay it but little or no regard. I have no doubt, that this would be much more acceptable to them, than the largest dispensation or indulgence from Rome. What saith the apostle, James ii. 20—24. How readest thou? But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works? seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? Now if it were by works that his faith was made perfect? then without works his faith would have been imperfect, and if so then works must be at least as necessary as faith, in order to salvation. Ye see then now that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. I doubt not that those, to whom James addressed his epistle, saw this, but I will not vouch for the eye sight of those to whom I repeat his words; in truth I believe James is no great favourite of theirs.

I shall now in a few words finish this communication, and the subject. Many are apt to mistake the least for the principal part of christianity, employing themselves in curious speculations, about mysteries, which nobody understands, and yet which every one is required, by the self-styled orthodox, to be-

lieve on pain of damnation, while they entirely neglect, or greatly undervalue, the very vitals of christianity; the divine morality of the gospel of Jesus, which is designed to regulate the life, to purify the heart or affections, and to be the guide of man to happiness and heaven. Until much less stress shall be laid on mere doubtful, speculative, disputed, controverted points, which I call the mint, annise, and cummin; and much more stress be laid on a good and upright life, which I consider as the weightier matters of the christian religion, there will continue to be so much nominal, and so little real piety. And what is the chaff to the wheat saith Jehovah?

Hindley, Aug. 2. 1826.

J. R.

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

THE CHRISTIAN'S HOPE.

*We copy the following from a volume of excellent Sermons,
by Coleman, Boston, U. S.*

Christian father and mother! when you have deposited in the grave the child of your affection, and confidence, and hope, perhaps the son whose virtues, and talents, and manly qualities were your pride and delight, or the daughter who clung closely to your heart, and whose affection and tenderness you hoped might soften the pangs of adversity, and cheer the evening of your life, tell me for what you would exchange that blessed hope, which after a short interval restores them to you, enrobed in celestial glory, beauty, and immortality. Christian! when you have seen the grave close over the mortal remains of the father, who has been your guide, and counsellor, and the most faithful of friends in your prosperity and adversity; or the kindest of mothers, whose hope and delight you were, who nurtured your helpless infancy, and so often, by her laborious and affectionate assiduity, soothed the hours of sickness and pain, and who, with so many prayers and tears, daily approached God's mercy seat for your health, happiness, improvement, and salvation, tell me for what you would exchange the thrilling hope, that they rest in peace with that divine Father, who cares for

them with even more tenderness, than they cared for you. Christian! when the bosom friend has been snatched from your side, the friend, with whom you took sweet counsel, and with whom you walked to the house of God, whose sentiments and sympathies were all yours, whose interests were indissolubly associated with your own, when you have heard the last affectionate farewell and taken the last look, and caught the last beam of kindness which shot from his closing eyes, say for what you would exchange the transporting hope of a reunion in purer friendship in a better world. Christians! I speak not to the aged only but to those, who have just passed the morning of life, when you remark around you the many vacancies, which death has made among those whom you loved, and valued, when you see how many of the aged, and venerable, and deep-rooted trees have been upturned, and how many of the fairest opening blossoms nipped, how many in their meridian have been suddenly cut down with the unripe and ungathered fruit hanging thick about them, when you have so often seen death trampling with indifference on the pride and boast of genius, wit, and learning, and piercing with his fatal arrow the thickest shield and panoply of virtue, and desolating the fairest scenes of human happiness, usefulness, and promise, tell me have you never felt the infinite value of that hope, which does not permit you to think of them as lost; but which commands you to take a wider prospect of the ways and purposes of God, and remark that some are but transplanted to a more genial soil and clime, there to strike a more vigorous root, to put forth fairer blossoms, and to pour out a sweeter fragrance, and a richer harvest; and that wisdom, benevolence, usefulness, integrity, and piety shall never want scope, and opportunity for exercise, improvement, and progress, so long as the greatest and best of Beings holds the throne of the universe.

The christian's hope is indeed well denominated a sure and steadfast anchor to the soul. God grant that this may be ours. But if you wish to die the death you must live the life of the righteous; if you would follow Jesus you must serve him; for into the holy, the heavenly Jerusalem, there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. Blessed are they who do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. The hope of the hypocrite shall perish. God will render to every man according to his deeds. As you sow here you shall reap hereafter. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, but to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, honour and immortality, eternal life; and there remaineth a rest for the people of God.

THE GLEANER.

"WE CULL THE CHOICEST."

THE JEWS.

(From Robinson's Morning Exercises.)

ALWAYS when I see a Jew, I recollect a saying of the Lord by the prophet Isaiah, *thou art the seed of Abraham, my friend*; and I find a thousand thoughts in my mind impelling me to my duty. The following is a sketch of what would fill volumes, of a subject on which we ought not to be ignorant.

First, let us inform ourselves of the general history of this people. The father of the family was Abraham. He was born of an idolatrous family, and, at the command of God, he became the first dissenter in the world. He quitted his country, and went and set up the worship of One God in his own family, and taught them to practise it. From this man proceeded a family, which increased into tribes, and formed a people as the stars in the heaven, or the sand on the sea shore, for multitude.

Read the book of Genesis, and other scripture histories of the same times, and without forming any romantic ideas of imitation, impossible except in their circumstances, admire the history, approve the prophecy, and copy the inoffensive purity of their lives.

When these people were in slavery in Egypt, they were at a school in which Providence taught them, by their own feelings, the nature and the worth of liberty, both civil and religious. What noble efforts they made to obtain it, and how God crowned their honest endeavours with success under the direction of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, you will read in the four books of Moses, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth. When they changed their government into an absolute monarchy, they enslaved themselves, and overwhelmed their country with idolatry, immorality, and calamities of every kind.

When Jesus came, and addressed himself to the blessing of all nations with an universal religion, some of his countrymen put him to death; but others espoused his cause, wrote his history and reasoned to establish it, not in the form of a secular kingdom, but in the convictions and consciences of reasonable men.

Further, let us allow the *merit* of the Jews. They deserve all the reputation, which the inspired writers give them. They exhibit single characters of consummate virtue, as Abraham for faith, Moses for meekness, Nehemiah for love of his country, and so on. As a church they preserved the oracles of God, and at their fall their remnants became the *riches of the world*. The apostles of us Gentiles was a Jew, and to say all in one

word, the Saviour and the Judge of mankind was a Jew. Let us respect the ancient Jews in the persons of their children, and for their sakes let us be friends to universal toleration.

Let us recollect the *sins* and the *calamities* of these people. Their sins were many and enormous ; but it was the *killing* of Jesus Christ, that completed their ruin. Let us examine what sins brought Jesus to the cross, and let us avoid the practice of them. Nor let us forget their calamities. They have been under all the punishments foretold four thousand years ago by Moses, and seem doomed to travel over the world to recommend a Gospel which they reject and despise. Their prophets, we find, did not slander them ; they are the people described, and their punishments prove the divine mission of their prophets. Thus God is glorified, whether man be lost or saved. In some future time he will be glorified in us, either his mercy if we embrace it, or his justice if we reject it ; for to reject the Gospel is to reject both the mercy and the justice of God.

What remains ? Only this at present. Let us avoid putting stumbling blocks in the way of the Jews. Let us propose Christianity to them as Jesus proposed it to them. Instead of the modern magic of scholastical divinity, let us lay before them their own prophecies. Let us show them their accomplishment in Jesus. Let us applaud their hatred of idolatry. Let us show them the morality of Jesus in our lives and tempers. Let us never abridge their civil liberty, nor ever try to force their consciences. Let us remind them, that as Jews they are bound to make the law of Moses the rule of their actions. Let us try to inspire them with suspicion of rabbinical and received traditions, and a generous love of investigating religious truth for themselves. Let us avoid all rash judging, and leave their future state to God.

INTELLIGENCE.

Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association.

The next Half Yearly Meeting of this Association will be held at Calne on Wednesday, September 13th, when the Rev. B. Waterhouse, of Warminster, is expected to preach. Service to commence at half-past eleven o'clock.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

The first Report of this Association is published. We are glad to find the prospects of usefulness and success are so great. The Report has been sent round to the Ministers of the different congregations ; if any should have been omitted, application may be made to the Rev. Thomas Cooper, at the Association Rooms, No. 3. Walbrook Buildings, Walbrook, London ; pointing out the way by which they can be forwarded.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 22. NEW SERIES

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OCTOBER 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

(From Bellamy's Bible)

1 SAMUEL, vi. 19.

NOTHING is more common in the present day, than for persons, who have paid little or no attention to the sacred writings, to select such passages as contain some idiom, peculiar to the oriental languages, or in which the English translators have been guilty of an over-sight. The design of such persons is to excite a contempt for the whole of the scriptures. Every attempt to elucidate such passages, and free them either from obscurity, or from the errors of translators, we deem laudable. We have selected the following from Mr. Bellamy, and submit it to the attentive consideration of our readers.

This passage, among others of the same description, has always been resorted to by objectors, in order to invalidate the truths of the sacred record. And it is surprising that for so many ages these things, so erroneously rendered in the European translations, should have escaped the learning and vigilance of Hebrew scholars, both Jews and Christians. Objectors have said, "How was it possible that so vast a population should have been found in the village of Beth-shemesh? But what increases our astonishment is, that after fifty thousand and seventy men are said to be smitten, only for looking into the ark, yet, according to the translation, the population must have been so great, that they could scarcely be missed; for in the next verse it is stated, that *the men of Beth-shemesh, said, who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?* and to whom shall

he go up for us? from which it appears, that the remaining number of men in Beth-sheuresh was far greater than those who were smitten, and that they considered them to be but a very inconsiderable number compared with themselves. But that which increases our astonishment is, that the translators should not have taken into their consideration, *the time that it would take for fifty thousand men to look into the ark! their being smitten for their curiosity—how they could so speedily remove those smitten for others to meet with the same fate—the deliberate coolness with which they marched to look into the ark.* But what is most surprising, how, *if two or three men only had been smitten, the others, seeing the fatal effects of looking into the ark, should have had the courage to indulge their curiosity notwithstanding the certain destruction that awaited them.* But according to the common translation, *no example was sufficient to put a stop to their idle curiosity, not even death itself, they are said to have gone to the ark, notwithstanding all this destruction, to the very last man of FIFTY THOUSAND AND SEVENTY MEN."* But it cannot be supposed that God, whose goodness is to reform and not to destroy man, would have caused the destruction of so great a number of people for merely looking into the ark.

Having shown the absurdity of supposing that such a number of men were found in the small village of Beth-shemesh, I shall now proceed to examine the passage in the original, agreeably to its construction, which will give us the obvious meaning as understood by the sacred writer.

Because they had looked into the ark of the Lord. This was a circumstance of so trivial and unimportant a nature, which would have been done by any other people, without any evil design, that the displeasure of God must have arisen from some other cause than that of innocently looking into the ark; for this is the whole of the charge against the people of Beth-shemesh, in the common translation.

The first word which requires our attention, is that which is rendered, *they had looked.* The people of Beth-shemesh were gross idolaters; and Beth-shemesh, which means, *the house of*

the sunlight, i. e. the house, or temple dedicated to the light of the sun, was the place where the idolaters assembled after the manner of the Hebrews once a-year; there they celebrated the worship of their great idol Dagon. And therefore it was the interest of the idolatrous priests to support their profession by pouring all the contempt in their power on the ark, and the worship of God, lest the people should be converted, and lest they should be deprived of their livings. Therefore it will appear that they did not look into the ark with any other design than to render it, and consequently the true worship of God, contemptible in the eyes of their people; so that the word *looked* does not convey the strong meaning which the sacred writer meant to express. This verb varies its mode of expression in other languages, as to *look*, *discern*, *see*, *expose*, &c. So that they exposed the ark and the true worship of God in contempt, to preserve their established idolatry, by which the whole hierarchy with their numerous priests consumed the industry of the people. The clause reads, *because they had exposed the ark of Jehovah*.

The last branch of the major proposition is here transposed, and made the second in the common version; it is rendered, *fifty thousand men*; but this vast number was not applied to the men who were smitten. The minor proposition which immediately precedes, *and he smote among the people, seventy men*. Here the minor proposition ends, which shows that seventy men were smitten; but the following clause is not connected with this. This branch of the proposition, viz. *fifty thousand men*, therefore, not being in the preceding clause, as to the number of men who were smitten, has altogether a different application: literally reads, *fifty of a thousand men*. The whole clause reads, *and he smote seventy men; fifty of a thousand men*. This gives us the number of men in this town or village; viz. fourteen hundred men: so that at the rate of *fifty of a thousand*, which is five in every hundred, the number smitten would be *seventy men*. It does not appear that even the seventy persons were smitten with death; a person may be smitten without being killed, but cannot be killed without being

smitten. The word simply, does not mean to smite with death; see Numb. xxii. 28, the ass was *smitten*, but not with death—Exod. v. 16—Cant. v. 7, the people were *smitten* but not killed—Jer. v. 3, the people were *smitten*, but grieved not.

The people of Beth-shemesh were idolaters, who worshipped the sun; the word *Beth-shemesh* meaning the *temple of the sun*. And these men were the idolatrous priests, and their assistants, who had not only looked into, but had exposed in contempt the sacred things which pointed out the true God in opposition to their idolatry; for so the word signifies.

These things were permitted to be taken by the idolaters, not only to bring back the Hebrews to a sense of their departure from the worship of God, but also to give their enemies an opportunity of acknowledging the God of heaven as the true God, in order to destroy the idolatry in the land. This however had not the effect; those that were interested in the emoluments arising from the pagan priesthood, were convinced that he who communicated by the cherubim was the true God; but had they acknowledged this, there would have been an end to their hierarchy in all the land of Canaan. The idolatrous priests themselves acknowledged the justice of God in this judgment; they acknowledged that he was *holy*, which they would not have done had he smitten without a cause, ver. 20, *And the men of Beth-shemesh said, who is able to stand before this holy Lord God.*

GOD A CONSUMING FIRE.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

THE expression of the apostle to the Hebrews, "Our God is a consuming fire," has often been thundered from the pulpits in places said to be devoted to the worship of the God of love; the very being, of whom the beloved disciple of Jesus says, "God is Love."

Either the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, or the apostle

John, must be in error ; for they speak of God in terms completely opposite, the one says, God is *Love*, the other, he is a *consuming fire* ; or the passage cannot be correctly understood, if the popular opinion is to be followed.

I am not willing to think, that either writer is in error ; but that, by the aid of the best interpreters of scripture, reason and common sense, the expressions of both will appear to be proper.

We must observe, that the language of the writer to the Hebrews is that of encouragement. He says, Wherefore we receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear : and then adds, as the reason and motive, For our God is a consuming fire.

Under the law, the divine acceptance of the sacrifice was manifested by fire. The fire descended from heaven and consumed the sacrifice, this was the token that the offering was accepted, by God, who was manifested under the symbol of consuming fire.

What more natural, for a Jew, writing to Jews, than that he should use the language to which they were accustomed, on religious subjects ; and although the dispensation was changed, and the christian converts were no longer under the law, terms were used to express their new privileges similar to those which had been applied to their former state and circumstances.

As the apostle more than once calls the exercises of christian worship sacrifices, sacrifices of praise, acceptable to God, &c., and as the Jewish converts were well acquainted with the ecclesiastical forms of expression relating to their former worship, they would probably understand the apostle as if he had said :

“ We christians, are not required to bring to the altar a real sacrifice, to offer up a victim, the acceptance of which is to be manifested by the consuming fire, which proclaimed the presence of the God of Israel, and manifested his acceptance of the worshipper and his offering ; these things are passed away, but the object of confidence and hope remains unchanged. He will be to us all that he was to his people of old. The God of christians will not be inattentive to the sacrifices of praise and de-

votion, which they bring to the Great Father of all. We have every encouragement to draw nigh to him, to serve him with reverence and pious awe, for our God will accept us and our offering. Our God is a consuming fire.

I shall be glad to know the opinion of any of your correspondents on this subject, and am, yours,

APOLLOS.

THE ETERNITY OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

MY surprise has many times been excited, on comparing the sentiments of the majority of writers and preachers, on this subject with the expressions relating to the same in the sacred writings.

One would expect from the popular works in which this subject is treated, that the reader would find it to be clearly the doctrine of the gospel, to be met with in every page of the New Testament as the doctrine taught by Jesus and his apostles; expressed in plain unequivocal language, such as the most common reader could easily understand. Also, that it should harmonize with the general tenor, of the sacred writings, and with the attributes and perfections of the Deity, the wise and benevolent father of all, as they are manifested in the great volume of nature, and revealed to us by Jesus the teacher sent from God, who hath taught us plainly of the Father.

Every idea we entertain of God to be just must be consistent with what he has revealed of his perfections and character. A being who is himself underived, independent, and eternal, must necessarily be a good being; good, without the least mixture of imperfection. As is his nature, such must be all his purposes, plans and operations, in the whole of his immense dominions, and such the conduct of his administration and government to all to whom he is the cause of existence. As he is superior to all influence from his creatures, as no addition can possibly be made to his happiness, nor his felicity suffer any diminution;

in giving existence and intelligence to creatures, it must be with a design to confer on, and to communicate happiness to such beings.

An all-perfect being must be just, his conduct in the administration of his government must be truly equitable, strictly impartial; there can be no deviation from the perfect line of equity. Men, however high their rank, however great their power, may be tempted to deviate from the rule of equity, they are imperfect; but the monarch of the universe is seated on a throne, the pillars of which are righteousness and truth, mercy and judgment; he holds an even balance, in which all things are weighed. The Lord is righteous in all his ways; the God of truth; "just and right is he."

As his nature, his plans, his government, his dispensations are equitable and benevolent, and as the object of all his plans, is the ultimate happiness of his intelligent creation; it follows, as a fair and legitimate conclusion from these premises, that the end will be accomplished. For who shall frustrate the plans of infinite wisdom? Where is the power that can contend with Omnipotence? Who can stay his hand; or who shall dare to say to him, what doest thou? My counsel shall stand, saith Jehovah, I will do all my pleasure. The word is gone out of my mouth, and shall not return unto me void, it shall accomplish the purposes for which I send it.

These, I conceive, must be admitted as first principles taught by the book of nature, and as truths shining around us in all their effulgence in the revelation which Jesus has made to us of the Great and Infinite Jehovah. They may then serve as tests, whereby to try the truth or falsehood of the tremendous doctrine of eternal torments!

From all that we see of the material creation, we are constrained to admit, that all the works of God bear evident marks of a designing mind. And he who hath meted out the heavens with a span, weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; fixed the sun in his place, appointed the moon her motion and her seasons; called the stars by their names; regulated the revolu-

tions of the worlds of light which bedeck the firmament; established and adjusted the laws which govern the universe; he by whose appointment the vicissitudes of our seasons, and the alternations of day and night take place, hath also formed man, and in arranging all the circumstances of his being hath provided for his present happiness, and is preparing him for his destination in the immortal state.

To suppose that God made man without any designed end, would be to encourage a thought disparaging to the fountain of wisdom. To suppose that he made man with a design to make him miserable, and that to eternity, is to encourage an idea, which would reflect on God a character, that I shudder to name; and indeed, there is no being in the universe, whose, name or whose character would, in this case, lend us an epithet applicable and appropriate.

As then, we cannot for a moment admit, that God created man without design, and as every thing that is sacred, that is just even amongst such imperfect creatures as we are, forbids our adopting the horrid idea that God made man with a design to make him for ever miserable: we cannot but admit the conclusion in its full force that he made him with the design to make him ultimately happy. And, as we have seen above, that no being can prevent the accomplishment of his designs, the doctrine of eternal misery of infinite, never-ending duration of punishment, has no foundation, in reason or in scripture, it is not the doctrine of the New Testament, for that is repugnant to any such idea.

This, Mr. Editor is a mere preliminary, should you admit it into the pages of the Reflector, I will in future communications endeavor to show, that the doctrine of Eternal Misery, derives no support, from either reason or revelation; but is opposed to both;—that it is not a doctrine according to godliness; but, in its consequences, so far as it is really believed, is destructive of morality, and has a tendency to licentiousness, to hardness of heart, and impiety both in principle and practice.

I am, Sir, yours,

THEOPHILUS.

THE MONUMENTS OF CHRISTIANITY.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

AT a time when indifference to evangelical truth is become common, and what is called philosophical christianity is fashionable, in the religious world, it behoves the disciple of Jesus to be awake to the impending danger.

Unitarians are charged by the pseudo orthodox, with lukewarmness, indifference, nay even with infidelity itself. However just this charge may be with respect to some who are called by that name, perhaps it may be replied to those who bring these charges, "physician heal thyself," for the leprosy has infected all parties and is making its inroads secretly among the members of all religious communities; and is much more prevalent than is generally expected. Religion is fashionable, an attendance on public worship, at least once on the Lord's day, is deemed decorous, and is not neglected but from the superior claims of business or pleasure.

That there should be professed Deists among those who pass for Unitarians, is not owing to the principles of Unitarianism, at least not to the principles of Christian Unitarianism, but to the want of them. And even that any of those who have been educated for the Christian ministry, should have renounced the cross of Christ, is, perhaps, to be attributed to the course of studies they have pursued, rather than to any thing they have discovered in Christianity that is irrational and absurd.

It is not, I conceive, much to be expected, that those whose early years have been spent in the study of Pagan theology, and who have passed through the polluted stream of the heathen poets, would feel much desire to advocate the religion of the humble Nazarene, which has nothing akin to the artificial graces of the ancients, and the sublime nonentities with which the polite part of mankind has been fascinated for ages. The fault is not so much in the individuals, as in the present plans in our colleges for the education of young ministers.

But the purport of the present communication is to show that

there are two monuments of Christianity, which the avowed Deist must destroy, before he can triumph over the most humble and unlettered Christian. These are, the observance of the first day of the week, among the general body of christians, and the regular celebration of the Lord's supper as a standing memorial of the death of the founder of Christianity.

All the customs of society have arisen from some event, some circumstances which gave birth to the observance. Among the mass of the people of this Island, the remembrance of what is called the gunpowder plot, and the restoration of Charles II. is perpetuated by the particular customs observed on those anniversaries; and were these to drop, perhaps the bulk of the people would lose the memory of those events, as but few, comparatively speaking, are acquainted with them from historical records.

It is very reasonable to suppose, that the disciples of Jesus would meet together on the first day of the week, for prayer and religious worship, and to converse on the great things connected with the resurrection of their crucified master. It is also natural to suppose that they would be punctual in their attention to his dying request, when he instituted his supper, "this DO in remembrance of me." And that christians in succeeding ages would follow the advice of the apostle, and, by an attention to this rite, show forth the Lord's death until he shall come again.

Now, unless unbelievers can prove that these observances are not of such antiquity, as christians believe them to be, all their objections are futile; their opposition unavailable; they have yet done nothing, and they can do nothing, effectually, against christianity.

If they refuse us the ground we take, we demand of them, and we have a right to demand, that they point out to us the actual time when the people called christians, began to observe the first day of the week as a day for religious worship; when they first met around the table of the Lord to perpetuate the memory of the founder of our religion.

I conceive, that so much importance attaches to these subjects, and so much may they be regarded as the firm, the everlasting

monuments of the truth, reality and antiquity of christianity, that were we to be deprived of the christian records, we should have a firm foundation for our faith in the religion of Jesus. I have often wondered that writers in defence of christianity have so little, or indeed hardly ever, insisted on these subjects; and I have been also surprised that neither Voltaire, Hume, nor Gibbon, has attempted any thing relating to these subjects, that might tend to shake the faith of men in christianity.

I have made these remarks, with a view to excite some of your correspondents, more able than myself, to take up the subject; in the mean time, I subscribe myself,

Your's respectfully,

ALPHA.

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

(From the New York Christian Inquirer.)

THE SACRIFICE, OR PROPITIATION OF JESUS.

SACRIFICE (derived from *sacer* and *fecti*, I have made sacred) is a devoting of something to sacred uses—an offering of something to God. What did Jesus devote and offer to his father?—Paul told the Hebrews that he offered himself without spot to God, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. What better sacrifice can any Christian offer to God, than the sacrifice of himself? than the offering and devoting of himself to sacred uses? God demanded this spiritual sacrifice even under the law when he said, “My son, give me thine heart.” This sacrifice or offering is more excellent than thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil. The whole life of Jesus here, was continually devoted and offered up to God, in one continual sacrifice, offering, or state of self-denial.

When it is said, that “now once, in the end of the world, (or age of Judaism) he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;”—and when Daniel was informed by Gabriel, “that

the Most Holy should be anointed, and sin ended, in the midst of the 70th week, when the Messiah, or anointed, should be cut off, but not for himself;—and that he should cause the Jewish sacrifices and oblation to cease at that time;”—what do all these things mean? I answer; love fulfils the law; love is the end of the law dispensation; for perfect love puts an end to transgression and fear. Perfect love casteth out fear; and so ends the law dispensation, under which the Jews were all their lives subject to bondage and fear. The termination of the law dispensation by the spiritual advent of Christ, was also the end of all sins and transgressions against it. This second advent or new covenant, put an end to the law, and sins and transgressions against it. The purpose of the mission of the man Jesus was “to redeem them that were under the law,” and so from its sins and transgressions. And Paul says, he was “a mediator of the new testament, that (by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first testament) they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.” Heb. ix. 15. Thus Christ put away sin against the law, after he sacrificed himself on the cross; and redeemed the Jews from the law by a new covenant, when the holy spirit descended on his followers, and baptised them to preach the gospel to some of all nations assembled at Jerusalem.

Was this sacrifice of himself carnal or spiritual? If it was carnal, it belonged to the law, and not to the gospel. God did not demand legal sacrifices of him; for it is said, that it was not possible that the legal sacrifices of bulls and goats should take away sins. “Wherefore when he, [Christ] cometh into the world, he saith, [to his Father,] sacrifice and offering [of the law kind] thou wouldst not; but a body hast thou prepared me. Then said I—Lo! I come to do thy will, O God.” Heb. x., Christ’s sacrifice or offering was to do God’s will; and every Christian that is enabled, through the divine spirit, to make this offering of his own will wholly unto God, is a true follower of Christ, who devoted and offered his whole life unto God till he expired on the cross. His whole life, therefore, was one continued sacrifice. Was the last act of his devoted life more

valuable than all the acts of his life?—No. For all the acts of his life include the ultimate act with them. By doing God's will we are sanctified. Consequently, this spiritual sacrifice, which Jesus exhibited to us in his example, was far better than any external offering, not excepting his crucifixion and death. Where we have only God's will ruling in us, we surely have love to God above all things, which is better than martyrdom. For Paul says, "though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing." Every one that loves God, does his will and keeps his commandments.

Millions have believed that the crucifixion and death of Jesus Christ on the wooden cross, was the propitiatory sacrifice that removed original sin, which they define, being conceived and born sinners, by imputation, or by the natural and wicked state, they think all men are in by Adam and Eve's fall out of a divine and holy state. Hence orthodox Universalists say, all died by Adam's sin, and all are made alive by Jesus Christ's propitiatory sacrifice on the cross. Calvinists say the elect only are made alive. Arminians say, it justifies penitents, and regenerates for sins past. What irrationality!—The truth is, Adam the first and Adam the second, are states; the first is the earthly state of man; and the second is the heavenly state. In the first state we all die unto righteousness; but in the second state we shall all be made alive unto it;—not by an outward propitiatory sacrifice, offered 1800 years ago, but by the propitiatory, justifying, and sanctifying spirit of God, which quickens the dead in spirit, and baptises the souls of believers into the light, which is the word, or revelation of God in the soul. Not the offering of the body or soul of Jesus, but the life, light, or spirit of God in that external body and human soul, is that which covers, atones and saves. We are not saved by the outward cross of Jesus; but by his internal power, on which all that is of flesh in us should be crucified, slain, and sacrificed. This only is the true and saving sacrifice of the soul to God.

Through the power of the holy spirit, Jesus offered himself to God's service. "This man (said Paul, Heb. 8.) had somewhat to offer. He offered up himself."—Isaiah said, "when thou

[Jehovah] shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed," &c.—The offering of the soul to God, is not a carnal sacrifice on a wooden cross, but a spiritual one on the spiritual cross, which is the power of God. Constantine and his army, Universalists, Calvinists, and Arminians, have exalted an outward cross and crucifixion much too high. It led the armies of Constantine; it was adored in the crusades; the crucifixion of the body of Jesus is still believed in and adored as a propitiatory sacrifice, that removed sins, long before, and long since the bloody sacrifice of the body on the cross.

The scripture teaches a different doctrine, and says, "If any man sin, we have (i. e. now have) an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ the righteous;—and he is the propitiation for our sins." As he is the true propitiation, no other can be the essential and saving propitiation. He is also our redemption; for he is the seed and the word, sown in the soul, that bruises the serpent's head, and thus becomes the resurrection and life of the soul. Jesus Christ is in us except we are reprobates; and this antitypical Jesus Christ within, is the only saving hope, and "is made unto us," says Paul, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." The typical Jesus Christ without, was sent only to the Jewish nation, to redeem them from under the bondage of the law.—Gal. iv. 4. Christendom trusts and worships a Jewish, outward, and typical Christ, who was crucified and slain as a criminal under the law. And they call him God, and pray unto him as God. But the true and invisible Christ within, the light, word, and inspiration, is GOD manifest in the flesh of every one of his obedient children, and is sent unto every man that comes into the world, and gives power to as many as believe and receive him or his light, to offer spiritual sacrifices, and become the sons of God.

Christendom believes that the sacrifice of the man Jesus Christ propitiated his Father, averted his wrath, and reconciled God to sinners. This is contrary to the words of God, by Paul who said, that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world [or age] unto himself." How irrational the reverse of this must be is obvious; for it blasphemously reconciles an unchangeable God

to changeable sinners, instead of turning sinners from sin, by reconciling them to God, and his works of wisdom, power, and goodness. Would you clear guilty sinners, because the innocent, holy, and meek Jesus suffered unjustly? The Scripture replies, No: by saying, that "God will by no means clear the guilty." Man frequently punishes the innocent for the guilty; indeed, they continually persecute the righteous, who suffer for the sins of their persecutors. But is God pleased with such unrighteous conduct to his saints?—Was he pleased with the Jews for crucifying and slaying his son?—Verily not. Yet Pastorini, a papist, said, "What human oblation (or sacrifice) can be more glorious to the divine Author of the Christian religion, than the sacrifice of holy victims for his sake!"—Was it a most glorious sacrifice to crucify Jesus, slay his followers, the pious Papists, the pious Protestants, &c. and torture them in ways too horrible and agonizing to read? If such oblations are so glorious and pleasing to the Lord, why did Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, pray to be delivered from crucifixion?—Mark, xiv. "Abba, Father," said he, "all things are possible unto thee?—take away this cup from me;—nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." Though God was displeased with his persecutors, yet he saw it would be best for his creature man, to let them kill his own Son, and cast him out of their Jewish vineyard.—But the inward sacrifice of Jesus, manifested in the words, "not my will, but thine, be done," was a spiritual sacrifice, highly pleasing to his Father; but the Jewish sacrifice of crucifixion was so displeasing to him, that in less than forty years, they were a murdered, ruined, and scattered people.

To die a martyr to the truth, to be a witness to the light and life of Jesus Christ within, is nevertheless a sacrifice acceptable to God, when circumstances are such as to require it, for then it is spiritual; but to believe with multitudes, that the external sacrifice of beasts, or martyrdom of a human being, is pleasing to God, is too revolting to dwell upon, for it approbates the horrid sacrifice of human beings to Moloch, and approves of the crucifixion of Jesus by the chief priests, elders, and sanhedrim of the Jews. They sacrificed him, (if the term may be so used.)

not truly in devotion to God, but to seize on the Lord's vineyard (i. e. on the Jewish commonwealth.) They also feared in their folly, that if they should let this man alone, that the Romans would come and take away their place and nation. By crucifying him their fears were realized agreeably to the prophecy of Moses. Deut. xxviii. 49, &c.

If God required a human being, as most men foolishly think, to be immolated to appease his indignation and wrath against sin, and that the victim to be immolated should be his son Jesus, why was this son so opposed to it? For did he not come to do his Father's will? Did God will that the chief priests and elders should be hypocrites, enthusiasts, and murderers of his son Jesus? Verily no. No wonder Jesus was opposed to their folly, cruelty and wickedness. He loved them, and prayed that his Father would forgive them, for they knew not what mischief they were doing. But I have said enough to show the folly, the danger, and idolatry of trusting in any external and bloody propitiation that was Jewish; whereas, we should adore and trust in the Christian spiritual propitiation, which is Jesus Christ within.

ABEL ATCHILLER.

*Progress of liberal Principles in the Western States of
North America,*

IT is with no small degree of gratification, that we, from time to time, record the progress of pure truth and christian charity in the Western World. Hoping that our readers will also be gratified, we copy the following, from the New York Christian Inquirer.

We have frequently noticed with much pleasure the increase of the Christian society in the United States, and, as it is a society in whose success every christian must feel a lively interest we are satisfied that the following extracts will be perused with pleasure by our readers. The rev. Mr. Badger, a preacher of this society, is now on a tour through the western states, and it

is from his journal, that we learn the following facts. Elder Kindale writes him, Dec. 11, 1825, as follows :

“ The christian conference on the Wabash was constituted in 1818 ; it was then considered a branch of the conference in Indiana, but has since been set off as a conference by itself, being capable of managing its own affairs. It has had eight annual meetings. The churches already organized contain about six hundred members, the country is new, and thinly inhabited, and the churches are much younger than the settlements.

“ The conference in Indiana was constituted in 1817. It extends over a much larger tract of country than that of the Illinois, and far exceeds it in number both of preachers and members. The first preachers of Indiana came from Kentucky, and those of Wabash, from Tennessee. There are a few churches of the christian order in the state of Illinois, on the Sangamaw and the Illinois rivers, of whom I have heard a good account, and understand they have had a revival of late, in which forty or fifty have experienced religion, but I cannot tell their number.

“ Several preachers from Kentucky and Tennessee have settled in different parts of Missouri ; they have had great revivals among them, but I neither know their number nor the names of all their preachers.

“ Dear brother, while it gives me great pleasure to hear from you, that primitive christianity is reviving in the east, I hope you will be no less pleased to hear of its success in the west. This vast country, which was lately a howling wilderness, NOW BLOSSOMS AS THE ROSE. On the big and little Wabash, which is still the haunt of savage men, and wild beasts, there are now large churches of happy Christians. Along the Ambar-rass and Bumpass, where twelve years ago, little else was heard but the howling of wolves, the hooting of owls, the fierce screams of panthers, and the fiercer screams of wild Indians, painted for war, and thirsting for human blood, are now heard the songs of Zion, the sound of prayer, and the voice of peace and pardon through a redeemer. Among us the demon of intolerance has been exposed in its multifarious character, and banished the

congregation of the faithful. Ignorance has given way to investigation ; and love and union are daily triumphing over prejudice and partyism. But still I see, I feel, I lament a great want of that holiness and divine power which characterized the followers of Jesus in the first ages of christianity."

" At present we have three conferences in Kentucky ; one in the north, one in the west, and one in the north-east of the state. That in the north contains 26 Elders, 8 unordained preachers, between forty and fifty churches, and about 2000 members.

" Of the conference in the west we are not prepared to give a particular account; we know of but 5 Elders, 2 unordained preachers, and 12 churches, containing about 500 souls.

" Of the conference in the south-east part of the state we can give but a partial account. We know 7 Elders, 3 unordained preachers, and about 20 churches, including about 850 souls.

" Of the Tennessee conference we number 17 Elders, 2 unordained preachers and 30 churches, containing about 1800 souls.

" Of the Alabama conference we can give but a very imperfect account, 7 Elders, 1 unordained preacher, the number of churches unknown, but fast increasing. At least there must be 600 members in that country.

" Of the conference in Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri, you are already instructed by our brethren in those states."

Mr. B. further states, that the number of preachers of this society in Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, &c. is about 225.

" The number of brethren is as follows, as near as can be ascertained ;—

In three conferences in Kentucky,	is about	3,350
Tennessee conference,		1,800
Alabama do.		600
Six do. in Ohio,		4,390
Indiana do.		1,200
Illinois do.		600
Missouri do.		1,000

Total, 12,940

" In Kentucky our brethren have built 36 meeting houses, two of them stone, ten of brick, and twenty four of wood.

" In Ohio they have built 28—3 stone, 4 brick, the rest wood.

(To be continued.)

THE GLEANER.

"WE CULL THE CHOICEST."

EGYPT,

From Abn Haukal, an Arabian Traveller, of the tenth Century.

THE chief city of Egypt is called *Fostat*, situate on the bank of the river Nile to the north. The Nile flows from the east ; and all this city is situated on one side of it. Near to it are certain edifices, called *Jezireh*, or the island, to which they pass from Fostat on a bridge. It is said that Fostat was the name of a certain tribe.

There are great quantities of dates, and many corn fields, along the banks of the Nile, from that to near *Asouan*, and to the borders of *Eskanderiah*, (Alexandria). When the weather becomes very warm, the water increases ; and when it sinks, they sow their grain ; after that, there is no necessity for water. In the land of Egypt there falls neither rain nor snow ; nor is there in the whole country any running stream besides the river Nile.

Fioum is not a very considerable town. It is said that the prophet Joseph, on whom be the blessing of God ! brought the water to that place and called it *Lahout* : and there is not any person who knows the fountains or source of the river Nile ; on this account, because it issues from a cavern in the territories of *Zingbar*, from a certain spot which a man may very nearly approach, yet never can arrive at : after this, it runs through the inhabited and desert parts of the land of the Nubians to *Misr* (Egypt ;) and there where it first becomes a river, it is equal to the *Deljeh* and *Frat* (Tigris and Euphrates.) And the water of the River Nile is the most pure and delicious of all the waters on the face of the earth.

The Nile produces *crocodiles*, and the fish *sekenkour* : and there is also a species of fish, called *raadah*, which if any person take in his hand while it is alive, that person will be affected by a trembling of his body ; when dead, this fish

resembles other fishes. The crocodile's head is very long, so as to be one half of his whole form ; and he has such teeth, that if a lion were to come within their hold, he would be destroyed. It sometimes happens that the crocodile comes out of the water on the dry ground ; but he has not then the same powers as when in the water. His skin is so hard that it resists the blows of all weapons when stricken on the back : they therefore wound him where the fore legs join the body (literally *under the arm pits*) and between the thighs. The *sekenkour* is a species of *that fish* (the crocodile,) but the crocodile has *hands and feet* ; and they use the *sekenkour* in medicinal and culinary preparations. This creature is not found any where but in the river Nile.

The sea which borders Egypt is bitter ; but where the river Nile pours into it, and overcomes it, the waters of the sea are rendered sweet. Farther out, when the waters of the Nile are confounded with the sea, the bitterness again predominates. In this sea there are Islands, to which one may pass over in boats or vessels. Of these islands are *Teneis* (or *Teines*) and *Damiat*. In each of these agriculture is practised, and cattle are kept ; and the kind of clothes called *refia*, (or *rekia*,) comes from these places.

INTELLIGENCE.

Somerset, Gloucester and Wilts Unitarian Missionary Association.

THE Fourth half-yearly Meeting of this Association was held at Calne, on Wednesday, Sept. 13, 1826 ; and met with encouragement beyond the expectation of its most sanguine supporters. Many friends assembled from Bath, Trowbridge, Warmley, Warminster, Ashwick, Marshfield, Nailsworth, Melksham, Bradford and Christian-Malford.

The Rev. R. Wright introduced the morning service with the warmth of devotion for which he is so distinguished ; the Secretary read the hymns ; and the Rev. B. Waterhouse, A. B. delivered an excellent sermon, on the Character of Christianity

and that of its Author; from 1 Tim. x. 11, "The glorious gospel of the blessed God."

The business of the Association was transacted in the chapel after service; S. Viveash, Esq. in the Chair; when the Secretary read the Second Annual Report. This showed, that the Committee regretted they had been circumscribed in their operations through the scantiness of their resources; but that they had exerted themselves to the utmost of their means. That the state of things in the country at large had been unfavourable to the obtaining of pecuniary resources for benevolent purposes; but that they still cherished the liveliest hopes of extensive success, and exhorted their friends to continue firm, united, and unwearied in their zeal. The Report showed further, that through the Rev. S. Martin's indefatigable exertions at Marshfield, the prospects of our friends there were considerably improving. That the Secretary, in co-operation with Messrs. Harding, Martin, and others, had opened a room at Nailsworth; and had regularly formed, with very encouraging prospects, a small Unitarian Society in that populous district. And moreover, that the Committee had directed their attention, as far as it appeared practicable, to the circulation of tracts.

More than eighty sat down to dinner, many of whom were ladies, which gave a peculiar interest to the party. H. E. Howse, Esq. kindly consented to take the chair. As soon as the cloth was drawn, all stood up; when the Bath, Trowbridge, and Calne Choirs, who had been arranged for the purpose at the bottom of the table, sang the accustomed hymn of thanks. (*) Amongst other toasts, "the British and Foreign Unitarian Association" was received with reiterated applause. The company were indebted for no small portion of their gratification to the Rev. R. Wright, who addressed them repeatedly; warmly enforcing what had been said in the Report respecting firmness, union, and unwearied zeal, amongst the friends of the Association; and dilating with moving eloquence upon the abundant incitements to such conduct. Messrs. Waterhouse, Evans, Martin, Viveash, Norton, Atherton, Howse, Jun., and H. Hawkes, also addressed the Meeting. At an early hour the company

(*) See Christian Reflector, Vol. II. p. 120, Note.

broke up, and dispersed in parties to the houses of several hospitable friends to tea.

The Minister of the day introduced the evening service with great solemnity; the Secretary again read the hymns; and the Rev. S. Martin delivered, to a crowded audience, an admirable Sermon on the Liberty of Christianity; from John viii. 36, "If the Son therefore shall make you free ye shall be free indeed."

The whole passed off with spirit. The day was fine; and the company numerous and social. Many new members joined the Association. Indeed every circumstance conduced to increase the enjoyment of those present, and all appeared satisfied and delighted.

Sept. 15th, 1826.

ON Sunday the 17th September, the Unitarian Chapel, Park Lane, near Wigan, having undergone repair, was re-opened for public Worship, when two excellent sermons were preached by the Rev. Mr. Dimock, of Warrington, and a handsome collection made in aid of the Sunday School attached to the Chapel.

On Friday, September 15th, the first stone of a Welch Church was laid at the bottom of Brownlow Hill, Liverpool, by the Bp. of Chester. This edifice is to be dedicated to *Saint David*. When will men universally agree to dedicate their places for religious worship to David's God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the *only* the *exclusive* object of religious worship. Part of the Inscription on the silver trowel with which his reverence spread the mortar, is the following "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue." The trowel becomes the property of the workman who used it.

The first stone of a new Chapel, for the use of the Wesleyan Methodists, was laid on Tuesday the 19th September, in Stanhope Street, Harrington, (Liverpool) by Mr. Robert Newton one of the preachers in that connexion, and superintendent of the district.

POETRY.

HYMN,
OF LORENZO DE' MEDICI.
(Mr. Roscoe's Translation)

GREAT God, by whose determined laws
All nature moves, unceasing cause,
Whose power the universe controls !
Who from the central point decreed,
That time his rapid flight should speed,
As round the eternal circle rolls.

At rest thyself, yet active still,
Thou mak'st and changest at thy will ;
Unmov'd alone, thou movest all ;
Whilst matter, eager to assume
New forms, from thee awaits its doom,
And hastens at thy powerful call.

Firm on the ductile mass imprest,
Whate'er thy wisdom deems the best,
Thou fashion'st with unbounded love ;
Whilst all the wond'ring eye surveys,
Unfolds to reason's clearer gaze,
The noble Archetype above.

Revolv'd in thy eternal mind,
Whate'er thy providence design'd,
Its *primal* fashion there assumed,
Till all in just dependence shown.
All future change to thee foreknown,
The whole in full perfection bloom'd.

Then first thy mighty chain was bound
The struggling elements around,
Till each assum'd its destin'd stand ;
Thy power their contraries controll'd,
And moist and dry, and heat and cold,
Were harmonis'd at thy command.

Nor scales the fire th' empyreal height,
Nor sinks the earth's incumbent weight,
Beneath the central darkness deep ;
But temper'd in proportions true,
Each binding each in order due,
They learn'd their destin'd bounds to keep.

Diffus'd through all the mighty whole,
 Thy goodness pours the living soul,
 That actuates each remoter part ;
 Thy energy with ceaseless force,
 Impels the still returning course,
 As 'midst the limbs the heaving heart.

From thee, great author, all that lives,
 Its stated boon of life receives;
 Ere long, again restor'd to thee ;
 Each insect, too minute to name,
 Yet owns a portion of thy flame,
 Part of thy num'rous family.

Resplendent cars of fiery glow,
 From realm of light to earth below,
 Thy animated offspring bear ;
 And when this mortal trial ends,
 Again the glorious car attends,
 To wing them to their native sphere.

Grant then, my God, that rais'd sublime,
 My soul the arduous heights may climb,
 And gaze upon the fount of light ;
 Nor ever from the place, where shines
 That cloudless sun, which ne'er declines,
 Remove again its raptur'd sight.

Purge thou, my God, its visual ray :
 Banish these earthly mists away ;
 Great centre towards which all things tend !
 In thee alone, Eternal Mind !
 The good their final refuge find,
 Of all Creator, Guide, and End.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

X. in our next ; W. came too late for the present number.

We have reprinted the numbers wanted to complete the former series, and the copies remaining on hand, five volumes in boards, may be had for *twelve shillings and six-pence* the set ; but a single volume cannot be sold under the full price—some few odd volumes remain on hand, which those who wish to complete their sets, may obtain by an early application.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

No. 23. NEW SERIES Price 4½d. NOVEMBER 1, 1826

RATIONAL DEVOTION.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

When I wrote the communication in your number for August, headed, "Rational Devotion," I had no idea of entering into controversy, but was in hopes some of your readers, who possess talent and opportunity, would take up the subject and elicit something which might overturn or strengthen the opinions of myself and others similarly situated. But as no one seems willing to take the side of the question which I have advocated, and as "an Unitarian Convert" has made some serious charges not only against myself but the denomination to which we belong, I wish to say a few words in reply. "He thinks the view which I have taken of the subject is calculated rather to chill than encourage devotional feeling." I must beg to differ from him on this subject, and if I must speak from experience, must say he is greatly in error. To be confined to a set form of Prayer, like the church of England-man, or the Dissenter who wearies the bending suppliant by a repetition of every thing, which we are supposed to want, checks the devotional feeling, renders the mind languid and weary, and thus destroys the very thing aimed at. It is an old saying, which I should suppose was well said, "let thy words be few, and well chosen," and if this were the case, my objections would be much weakened.

That Christ is the way wherein christians ought to walk must be readily granted; but, that he has declared that the worshipper must use Petition before he can become his follower, or, a doer of the will of his Heavenly Father; I am not yet convinced. Does A. U. C. suppose the Prayer called the Lord's Prayer, is the only one which ought to be used, which I think he must,

if he will follow the words literally, Matt. vi. 9. After this manner pray ye, Our Father, &c. and Luke ii. 2, when ye pray, say Our Father, &c.? Or does he consider it a model only, by which we are to regulate our worship? The latter I should suppose would be his opinion; and if so in a mixed congregation (for I am speaking of Public Worship only) where the situations and circumstances of the worshippers are so various and dissimilar would it not be better to curtail the petitionary form, and lead the mind to heaven's throne in gratitude and thankfulness for every favour received, and a ready acknowledgment that from him and him alone must every future blessing proceed? Such a mode to me seems best calculated for Public Worship, and contains as much of the supplicatory form as is necessary either to constitute a follower of Christ, or to impress with truly devotional feeling.

Your correspondent admits the point for which I contended, the immutability of the Deity; consequently, every thing that follows from devotion is operative only on man; and *in idea only* does man *at present* receive any benefit; but, hereafter the reward will be bestowed which the mind has by such exercises been prepared for, and led to expect. But says A. U. C. the argument of the Young Unitarian if it be good for any thing, it is good for too much; and that it would set aside devotion altogether." This, whatever may be my argument, was never intended; nor do I yet think that it follows as a consequence. I before asserted, and again declare, that every thing devotional is operative only on man; nor does A. U. C. deny this, consequently our Heavenly Father having declared that he will withhold no good thing from them who love and fear him; and scripture declaring that his blessings alike descend on the unthankful as well as the just; and that if we will seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness all things necessary will be given unto us; petition for things temporal must be unnecessary. But not so with respect to an acknowledgment of our faults, our readiness to forgive our brethren that we may be forgiven, thankfulness for every blessing received, and submissive dependence for

the future; for this constitutes vital godliness; and is what our Heavenly Parent demands and expects from us, as creatures of his bounty and children of his parental care. Thus we see, that the mere service of the lips, that form, show, or parade is of no avail; for, God is a spirit, and, *in spirit* must he be worshipped; the heart being right towards him constitutes true piety and devotion; from which, every christian requisite will proceed.

I had said, that before we place any weight on the example of Christ, or the apostles, ought we not to recollect that they were placed in circumstances which might warrant a form of worship, which would be useless to us? This A. U. C. calls an assertion, at which he was startled. But if by this time he has recovered from his fright, I would beg of him to read my communication again, and he will find the "*assertion*" is not mine. But, says he, the fact is, those circumstances would have superseded the necessity of petition, if any thing would. If, they with their superior advantages thought petition necessary, it must be necessary to us, who are not so distinguished." And again, "If, when under special illumination, they adopted such a form of address, it must be right; or we conclude, it must have led them wrong." To all this I cannot assent; for they had a work to perform which made it indispensably necessary that they should use petition, as I said before to convince their audience that they were specially commissioned; for they were broaching a system which was new and opposed to prevailing opinion, and therefore it was necessary that every thing which would tend to strengthen their mission should be performed. Our Saviour himself so far from opposing the plan or mode which to me appears correct, does himself give evidence that for those who stood by, he descended to a form of words, that they might believe that the Father had sent him. See John ii. 42. The dissimilarity in circumstance betwixt us and the first preachers of christianity, sufficiently accounts for dissimilarity in form of devotion, and therefore, the illumination with which they were gifted so far from leading them wrong, led them in a path which was every way advantageous to those to whom they were sent.

Your correspondent again expresses his astonishment at another of my remarks, that the most favourable precept of Christ for Petition, the Sermon on the Mount, was to me slender evidence. The comments of our Saviour upon prayer in this sermon as well as in Luke, chap. ii. sufficiently convince me that the words were not literally to be followed, but, that we were to regulate our worship by it. If the Lord's prayer was the only one which Christians ought to use, why have they departed from it? If it were only a model, then is devotion to be regulated by times, places and circumstances; what would suit one would ill suit another; and what might be used in *private*, would not answer for public. Besides, if I mistake not, it is a rule for private worship only, not public, else why say, "Enter into thy closet, and shut to thy door, &c. And again, Jesus advised his followers not to be solicitous about either meat, drink or clothing, "for your Father," says he, "knoweth that ye have need of these things," and will assuredly grant them. I cannot therefore, think that it will be considered a deficiency in our devotion not to offer petition; for the most that is meant in a petitionary form, I conceive to be only another form of expressing our dependence upon the mercy and bounty of the Deity.

I had said that the tautological form which was adopted by many, reasonably exposed them to the sneers of the Unbeliever. Now I would ask A. U. C. if, on further reflection, he can say he has done me justice on this point. It was the tautology which was here complained of, and which our Saviour condemned, which was supposed to deserve the sneers of the Unbeliever. Would the setting aside of this, be to be laughed out of our obedience to Christ? Or to grant that the Unbeliever was superior to him? Or that he was wiser than him? Or that he could teach us a more rational and beautiful system of religion; I think not, nor can the practice be maintained by any who profess to let reason and common sense govern them in their devotions; but, must ever be condemned by those who dare to pass the limits of custom, and overstep the bounds of superstition and fanaticism. It will I suppose be admitted

that the apostle of the Gentiles was as zealously alive to the principles of true christianity, as was possible; yet, he himself declares, that to the Jews he became a Jew, that he might gain the Jews—to them that were without the law; as without law that he might gain them that were without law—to the weak, he became weak, that he might gain the weak—he became all things to all men, that by all means he might save some. Now, unless A. U. C. means to lay the same charge against Paul, which he lays against those who would wish to regulate their worship according to the circumstances in which they are placed; his observations are futile, and unworthy of our acceptance. If Unbelievers (I speak from experience) if unbelievers, I say, must ever be brought into the fold of christianity, Unitarians are the only persons who can effect it; and if petition, particularly tautological petition is not essentially requisite; then may they in their Public Worship (a service for which I believe there is neither Christian nor Apostolic rule or injunction) dispense with it, and remove another barrier to the free course of Christianity.

Having now noticed the argument of A. U. C. in reply to my communication, I come to that part which he has thought proper to introduce. “He is fearful I am too much of a Unitarian on this point, and that there are many who entertain the same cold philosophy as myself; and hence concludes, Unitarians have nearly banished devotion from amongst them.” The seriousness of the charge here made makes me doubt the correctness of his signature. I had no idea that there were any who entertained the same opinion on this point; nor did I ever find one amongst a numerous acquaintance, but who opposed it. But how A. U. C. comes to know that they are so numerous, I cannot tell. Nor can I conceive how he knows the whole body are destitute of even the appearance of devotion except on the Sunday and in the meeting house. Because there are individuals amongst them, as there are amongst all sects, who neglect to pay that regard to religious duties which is necessary, are the whole body to be condemned? Does he enter the private chambers of

the denomination, the closets of their devotions in such abundance as to leave ground for such an insinuation? Or has he the power to roam all space and pry into the secrets of every bosom, or is the noisy open show of the enthusiast superior to the religion of the heart? Does he suppose it possible for the advocates of a superior system (which he must allow it to be, if his signature be not false) to have less of the true spirit of religion, than the advocates of a more erroneous faith? Because the Unitarian thinks it wrong or not essential to comply with the forms and rules of the fanatic and superstitious, are they to be branded as ungodly, as "wanting of piety," or "afraid to appear so," or altogether "careless on the subject?" Is the petition of the mistaken enthusiast, who brawls aloud "do, Jesus, come, but if thou cannot, send thy Father," to be preferred to their religious feeling who disdain noise and show, but who exhibit its effects in their works of virtue, their amiable deportment, and labours of love? Let A. U. C. consider these questions before he venture to brand a whole denomination; a denomination which has been declared even by its persecuting opponents, "to be patterns worthy of being imitated by their Trinitarian brethren; a denomination strictly moral, and actuated by an earnest desire to promote practical religion;" a denomination, "which fulfil the law of love, from love to God, and benevolence to man;" a denomination, "which are generally men of probity, justice and charity, and seem to be very much in earnest in pressing the obligations to very high degrees of virtue." (Fox, Adams and Burnett.) If he has belonged to the system to which he seems in this case to give so much credence, he must know that the branded party are not a whit behind their opponents, who make religion consist, in many cases, in frames and forms, long faces, groans and brawls—he must know that there is a responsibility attaches to the advocacy of unpopular doctrines, which the advocates of popular ones feel not. But, "the more serious of the orthodox party exclaim, we are a prayerless people, and from thence draw an inference to the prejudice of our cause." But can we avoid this, we, who are an

unpopular sect; whose defence is seldom listened to, or, if heard or read, through prejudice or ill will, immediately declare it a falsehood? But, "the orthodox say so." Aye, that may be, for a self styled elect one, has insinuated that they discard religion altogether. But is this correct, because he would have it so understood? Unitarians have also been declared, even by those who have been compelled to say otherwise of them," to be liars to God and man—infidels in belief—their teachers subvertors of the Gospel—their system unproductive of holiness—wicked in heart—hostile to Christ and leagued to destroy his kingdom—rejectors and mutilators of scripture—and if christianity be on their tongue, awful and obstinate infidelity is in their hearts." Such are the lengths to which orthodox teachers have gone, in branding the sect every where spoken against; but which I am satisfied are *false*. And though A. U. C. has not, as appears to me, been long under the banners of this despised sect, but has been viewing them through the darkened glass which he formerly used; it is to be hoped that he will, *ere long*, see them more favourably, and judge and speak more charitably.

A YOUNG UNITARIAN.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR.

Your correspondent A. U. C. p. p. 207—208, evades the real difficulty which occurs from comparing the Lord's Prayer, with the assertion of the Apostle James, i. 13.

We are instructed by Christ to pray to God that HE will not lead us into temptation; James asserts that God tempteth no man. If the apostle be correct, the passage (as it stands) in the Lord's Prayer has no meaning, because it deprecates an imaginary evil. The substitution of *trial* for *temptation* is not satisfactory, even if the terms are synonymous. The Question is, does the Almighty *lead* us into these difficulties, by whatever name they may be designated?

The Prayer of our Saviour in the garden is of "similar signification" with the clause "deliver us from evil;"—he was praying to be delivered from that cup, that testimony of blood, which he saw before him.

Allowing the supposition of A. U. C. he does not supply the ellipses in a proper manner. The Lord's Prayer may be divided into three sections,—First, Adoration, second, Intercession, and third, Glorification, and the phraseology of each, differs. The ellipses is therefore properly supplied by A. U. C. in the *instances* which he adduces, from the language of adoration. But from the words, "Give us this day &c." to "deliver us from evil," it is evident that the phraseology is changed—and if I may be allowed the expression, the personal, or active interference of the Almighty Being is supplicated. Do thou give us our daily bread;—do thou forgive us our trespasses; and therefore, not "*may we not be led, &c.*" but *do thou not lead us into temptation, or, Our Father—lead us not into temptation.*

The Cottage Bible which your correspondent quotes, is not particularly happy in demonstrating that God is the author of temptation even in "extraordinary cases," Two out of three of the instances adduced to support, in direct opposition to James, the ascription (of some) of our temptations to God, are objectionable. The temptation of Job is rather too figurative and romantic a narrative, to be allowed to furnish a positive contradiction to an apostolic precept; and there are so many apparently insurmountable objections to the literal interpretation of Christ's temptation in the wilderness, that it cannot be referred to, as affording evidence of any weight.

The quotation concluded with a false assumption. We are NOT "taught to pray that God will be pleased to preserve us from such temptations, &c." There is a very material difference between *leading into*, and *preserving from*,—which with due deference to the erudition of the Cottage Bible, may be deemed sufficient to invalidate the authority of its "exposition."

ON FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,—That the doctrine of never ending tortures is incompatible with the justice, to say nothing of the mercy and love of the Almighty, is a position which no rational being can consistently deny, who endeavours to form as far as his limited powers will allow, accurate ideas of the nature and extent of those attributes. But does not Theophilus, (p. 232,) arrive at a conclusion which his premises will not warrant, when he says that God made man with a design that he should be ultimately happy? His attempt to prove it, not from Scripture, but by a chain of reasoning founded on the omnipotence and benevolence of the Deity, is I think a failure; for although it would be absurd to suppose, that the Almighty created man, without design yet we have no evidence from natural religion,—we have no data from whence by reasoning to infer, that this design destines him for an immortal state.

The doctrine of a future state is a doctrine of Revelation, and the demonstration of its truth by the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a supernatural event. Nature and her laws impart no instruction here; and the analogies and arguments which some, in the pride of worldly wisdom have plumed themselves upon drawing from her stores, are feeble and comfortless, if regarded as our only evidence. It is the scriptures that furnish us with positive testimony on the subject, and those who reject their authority make a sad exchange of light and happiness, for obscurity and doubt.

Theophilus, therefore, assumes the existence of an immortal state, in which man must be ultimately happy, because a God of benevolence would not create beings, designing them to be eternally miserable. Is there then no alternative,—does the conclusion inevitably follow? Is there no medium between misery and happiness, but must it necessarily be either one or the other? May not the design of the Almighty be, to reward those only with happiness, who in this life, have not been weary in well doing?—must the transgressors of his holy command-

ments be partakers of ultimate happiness also? then, where is the distinction between virtue and vice, good and evil?

And without admitting the conclusion of Theophilus "in its full force,"—is it unreasonable to infer, that the Almighty after giving to all his rational creatures, an opportunity of becoming inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, will, without implicating his *design*, annihilate or destroy those who lived without him in the world; and fulfil his promises to all those who to the utmost of their power had done that which was well pleasing in his sight, looking for the life to come.

DELTA.

HEBREW NUMBERS.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

I was not a little gratified, on reading the extract from Bellamy, in your last number. I have since met with a passage from Bochart on the same subject, quoted into an excellent work intitled "An Essay for a New Translation of the Bible, 1727," I now send it for insertion, as I think the principle will apply to the numbers used in the Old Testament, which appear, according to the present rendering exceedingly extravagant.

I am, yours,

JUNIUS.

The Learned Bochart could not without horror read, what the versions make the scripture say, 1 Sam. vi. 19. "That God smote fifty thousand and threescore and ten men of the inhabitants of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark." For he could not imagine that God, who is goodness itself, could have made such slaughter of those who received the ark with joy at its return, and offered several sacrifices to God on that account. Besides, he could not conceive that there could have been such a multitude of people in a village on the borders

of Judea. These considerations inclined him to follow the opinion of Josephus, who says, that God only smote seventy men, and he proves that the text says no other thing; and that it should be translated, "And he smote threescore and ten men of the people of Bethshemesh, viz. fifty men of a thousand, which answers exactly to the Hebrew; and he shews that it is not usual in the Hebrew tongue, to make the thousands to go before inferior numbers, for making up a total sum, but that they constantly begin with the lesser number, and end with the greater, as St. Jerom has likewise observed in speaking of Daniel's seventy weeks.

"Nor are we troubled, to find that seven weeks are first mentioned, and then sixty-two, and then one, which is divided into two parts. For 'tis the idiom of the Hebrew tongue, and likewise of the Latin in the most ancient writers of it, to name the lesser number first, and afterwards the greater. For example; we say now according to the propriety of our speech, Abraham lived one hundred seventy and five years; they on the contrary said, Abaaham lived five years and seventy and an hundred."

Hieron. in Dan. Heb.

ON FAITH.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR,—NOTHING, is more talked about in the religious world than Faith, and, perhaps, there is not a subject so little understood. Faith seems with almost every man to be his belief or his opinion respecting certain dogmas, supposed to relate to christianity. And the saving faith so much boasted of by the Calvinist is, that strong persuasion of mind into which he has wrought himself,—that God hath from eternity chosen him to everlasting life, and to the possession of the kingdom of heaven; to which, if we may judge by the conduct of some of these good folks his claim may be as strong as that of a madman to the Crown of Great Britain.

I shall feel myself much obliged if some of your correspond-

ents will favor me, through the medium of the Reflector, with a good definition of Faith, as stated in the New Testament, and add a dissertation illustrative of the doctrine, and the cases of the same in the christian profession.

I am your's,

X.

EXTRACTS FROM AMERICAN PUBLICATIONS.

UNITARIANISM NOT A NEW RELIGION.

We have been favoured by a friend in New York with an excellent Sermon, on the Unity and Supremacy of God the Father, preached in Charleston, S. C. April 22, 1826, by Daniel K. Whitaker ; from which we make the following extract, pp. 32—33.

Let it not be imagined that Unitarianism is a new religion that has just sprung into existence. No, the farthest possible from such a supposition is the fact. We believe it, on the contrary, to have been the pure and simple doctrine of the primeval age, and trace out its commencement to the remotest known point of antiquity. It was the single voice of the one God that Adam heard in the garden after the commission of his first offence. It was the same voice that dictated the ten commandments of the moral law to Moses, amidst the thunders of Sinai, and the prostration of the astonished multitude, and which claimed at that time for the being who uttered it, undisputed and unrivalled homage, annexing penalties the most awful to a wilful violation of the great command. It was the same voice that spoke from time to time in the inspirations of the prophets, who delivered the messages of the divine will. Every thing, in the early history of the world, that connected man with his maker, bears upon it the simple and grand impression of the divine Unity. The Jews, as far as regards this great doctrine, have always been

Unitarians. Were they not favoured with the immediate communications of God? How happens it that in all their sacred Scriptures, which we receive equally with them, as inspired writings, we find no intimation of the existence of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead and no ascriptions of praise to such a mysterious combination of beings? How happens it that the beautiful idea of the absolute unity of the great Creator beams forth with a divine force and splendour from almost every sentence of their holy canon? Is it possible that their inspired writers were labouring under mistake, for so many ages, respecting this very important subject? Was their opposition to Jesus Christ, in after times, founded upon his denial of the unity of God, and his efforts to inculcate the doctrine of a trinity of persons in the divine nature? Far from it. We find, on the contrary, that he received their unqualified approbation for his sentiments on this subject.—To the question of the Hebrew lawyer, Which was the great commandment of the law?—he replied, “The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel the Lord, our God, is one Lord.” And what did the disciple of Moses say to this? Did he bring a charge against Christ for denying the Scriptures, because he had not asserted the doctrine of the trinity, or maintained a sort of “three-fold distinction” in the divine nature? How did he answer him? “Well, Master, *thou hast said the truth*, for there is one God, and there is none other but he.” This was the doctrine of his countrymen, and he could not object to Christianity on this account. Did our Saviour, then, recall his original position—or alter or qualify it in order that it might harmonize better with the sublime metaphysical “triad of Plato,” or the still more refined and mysterious “distinctions” of later periods? No—not a word by way of retracting what he had said—not a word in the way of explanation. The statement he had made was unalterably true, and he did not wish to change it?—but, turning to this able expounder of the law, the last messenger of the divine will to mankind, addressed to him these emphatic words; “Thou”—thou believer in the simple unity of God, the God of Moses and the Pro-

phets—"Thou art not far from the kingdom of God!" With regard to this important doctrine, then, the statements of Jesus Christ harmonized perfectly with those of the ancient prophets, and the opinions of the Jews at the time of his appearance. In no boasting spirit, we may say that this single circumstance, the agreement of the two dispensations, the old and the new, in this particular point, firmly establishes the most important doctrine of Unitarianism, and gives it a complete and splendid triumph over all the contrary systems and mysterious theories invented in these latter ages by the wit and ingenuity of man.

THE GLEANER.

"WE CULL THE CHOICEST."

ELECTION AND REPROBATION.

(From the New York Christian Inquirer.)

AT the present period many who call themselves *Calvinists*, deny that Calvin taught the doctrines of Election and Reprobation, in the manner ascribed to him by his opponents. That our readers may judge for themselves, what Calvin's views were, we have made the following extract, (verbatim et literatim,) from his "Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, chap ix. 22 and 23 verses. *What if God willing to show his wrath, &c.*

"Their mayne difference is, that the Reprobates are Vessels of Wrath vnto Damnation: the Elect, vessels of Mercy vnto Salvation; and both for the glory of God.

"A vessell of Wrath is such a one vpon whom GOD will shew no mercy, but will be angry with him for his sinne, leaue him in it, and at last take vengeance on him for it. A vessell of Mercy, such, a one vpon whom God purposeth to shew mercy, in forgiuing his sinne, bringing him out of it, and vnto saluation,

"Here care is to be had of distinguishing some like phrases as a Vessell of Wrath, and a child of Wrath. These differ. A child of wrath may bee a vessell of Mercy, but a vessell of

Wrath cannot. As *Paul* and the Elect Ephesians are by Nature the children of Wrath, as well as others. A child of wrath notes our corrupt estate. A vessell of wrath the Destination of such a one to damnation. But a child of Disobedience and a vessell of Wrath, are all one. Again,

“We preach Mercy; if thou be a Reprobate, it is not meant to thee. Wee preach Wrath: if thou be an elect, this is not meant to thee, but to the Reprobate. It may be, that when mercy is preaching, and powring downe, the Reprobate looks after it, and thinks to haue it; but hee deceiues himselfe. When a Father is cutting bread among his children, their little eyes are vpon euery piece that is cut: It may be also the dogge stands by (Reprobates may not grudge the comparison, whose state is worse then the dogs.) The dogge it may be stands by, and gapes for the bread; but the Father giues the bread to the children: he giues to the dogge also, but it is a cudgell or whip, and spurnes him from him. So Mercy is the childrens bread, it hangs not for the Reprobates tooth.

2. “There is great difference also betweene the Elect and and Reprobate, in regard of their end. The Elect shall bee saued, the Reprobate, assuredly damned. Sometimes hee vseth the Reprobates as a rodde, to chastise his children, but when hee hath serued his pleasure by them, he deales with them as he did with the king of *Assur*, he throwes them into the fire.

“God vseth them, who cannot but vse them well, and they doe no more but what he hath appointed; and when they haue done according to his secret appointment, they shall be damned, for not obeying his reuealed appointment. Yea, he will make that which they doe against his will, to serue his owne will, and our good.”

THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

The first number of a little work on this subject, by the Rev. F. Knowles, has just made its appearance. It is divided into books and chapters, with a list of questions, at the foot of each chapter. The work is designed for schools, Sunday schools, and young persons, and in the hand of a judicious teacher is calculated to be exceedingly useful. The price is so small that it is placed within the reach of every one. Each number contains 16 pp. foolscap, 8vo.

POETRY.

*Lines written after a Summer Shower.**(Attributed to Professor Norton.)*

THE rain is o'er—how dense and bright
 Yon pearly clouds reposing lie!
 Cloud above cloud, a glorious sight,
 Contrasting with the dark blue sky.

In grateful silence earth receives
 The general blessing, fresh and fair;
 Each flower expands its little leaves,
 As glad the common joy to share.

The softened sunbeams pour around
 A fairy light, uncertain, pale;
 The wind flows cool—the scented ground
 Is breathing odours on the gale.

Mid yon rich cloud's voluptuous pile
 Methinks some spirit of the air
 Might rest, to gaze below awhile,
 Then turn to bathe and revel there.

The sun breaks forth; from off the scene
 Its floating veil of mist is flung,
 And all the wilderness of green
 With trembling drops of life is hung.

Now gaze on nature—yet the same,—
 Glowing with life, by breezes fann'd,
 Luxuriant, lovely, as she came
 Fresh in her youth from God's own hand.

Hear the rich music of that voice
 Which sounds from all below, above—
 She calls her children to rejoice,
 And round them throws her arms of love.

Drink in her influence—low born care,
 And all the train of mean desire,
 Refuse to breathe this holy air,
 And mid this living light expire.

(Christian Inquirer.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

We request W. to wait another month. Our Friend J. R's communication is received, and we would recommend him to let it stand over to the next volume as the subject is important, and will probably occasion replies.

Dissenter's paper is received, but in its present form we think it objectionable, his promised favor on the same subject, if free from localities, will be acceptable. Theophilus in our next.

To Subscribers.

We shall give an additional half sheet in our next, to make up for the deficiency of the present number, which was unavoidable.

We have reprinted the numbers wanted to complete the former series, and the copies remaining on hand, five volumes in boards, may be had for *twelve shillings and six-pence* the set; but a single volume cannot be sold under the full price—some few odd volumes remain on hand, which those who wish to complete their sets, may obtain by an early application.

THE
CHRISTIAN REFLECTOR,
AND
THEOLOGICAL INQUIRER.

Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right.—JESUS.

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DECEMBER 1, 1826.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE.

The following observations are copied from a work which is now very scarce, entitled "An Essay for a new translation of the Bible." A faithful translation of the Old Testament would go far to remove many of the difficulties which clog the text in our version, and do away with the objections which unbelievers are continually urging.

Almost all the Translations, make God say to Moses, that he was not known to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by his name Jehovah: though God says expressly to the first of those Patriarchs, I am Jehovah, who brought thee from Ur of the Chaldees; and that Abraham says himself to the king of Sodom, I have lift up my hands unto Jehovah, the most high, the possessor of heaven and earth; and that Moses observes, then men began to bear, or call upon, the name of Jehovah in the days of Seth. I shall not here mention all the reasonings used by divines to adjust this contradiction, and to preserve to Moses the pretended privilege of having first known God by the name Jehovah; but there is perhaps none, who considers that the Hebrew particle *Lo*, which is in the original, is often taken interrogatively, who will not easily grant that it is so to be taken in this place, as some Interpreters have observed. And it cannot be denied, but that it is to be understood thus in other texts, where all the Versions have expressed it by an interrogation, which is equivalent to the strongest and most positive affirmation: and in some copies of the Septuagint, the text in hand is rendered, "I have even manifested myself to them by my name, Lord." The most learned Rabbis also, have not understood it otherwise, when they observe, that this particle is not absolutely negative, but comparative; as in several other places in Scripture, where the versions make God to say, "Thy name shall be no

more called Jacob, but Israel ; ” though that Patriarch was afterwards often called by his first name ; and in another place, speaking to Samuel, “ They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me,” though they had equally rejected the government of Samuel, and that of God ; and again, “ I desired mercy and not sacrifice,” though he had appointed sacrifices, and often declared that they were well pleasing to him. They also make Moses say, “ your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord, though they had not less murmured against him than against God. We must therefore rectify all those places, and translate, “ thy name shall not only be called Jacob, but likewise *Israel* ; they have not only rejected you but me also ; I take pleasure in mercy, and not only in sacrifices ; your murmurings are not only against us, but also against God ; I have not only made myself known to them by my name Jehovah, or rather, was, not I even known to them by my name Jehovah ? ” Which takes away the seeming contradiction, and resolves all the difficulties that may be proposed on this subject.

The same amendment must necessarily be made, Gen. xi. 6, where the versions say of the builders of the Tower of Babel, “ and now nothing shall be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.” For this is false, for God soon put a stop to their design, by confounding them, and “ scattering them abroad from thence, upon the face of the earth.” The same particle, which is indeed sometimes taken negatively, is evidently here to be taken interrogatively, and is equal to the most express affirmation. We should therefore translate this text, with the Flemish revisors and Leusden, thus ; “ shall they not be restrained in all that they have imagined to do ? ” Which was presently executed accordingly.

Dorscheus, and M. Pfeiffer think, that Ezekiel xiv. 9. is to be translated by way of interrogation, thus : “ if a prophet suffer himself to be deceived, I the Lord, shall I have deceived that prophet ? On the contrary, I will stretch out my hand against him.” And certainly, it is much more reasonable to render it so, than as our version and others have done ; “ I the Lord have deceived that prophet : which cannot but suggest notions to us

very injurious to the Divine Majesty. For all grammarians, and R. David Kimki do grant, that the Hebrew particle HE, which is interrogative, is often suppress in the Hebrew text. Junius and Tremellius have supplied it, Psal. cxx. 1. Levit. xviii. 28, and the Lxx. Psal. cv. 28. And it must necessarily be supplied too, in other texts, as our translators have very well observed. But yet there is no need of this criticism in this place. For the Hebrew verb, which we render to deceive, signifies often to infatuate. So that God is so far from saying, that he has deceived that false prophet that on the contrary, he declares that he will punish him for his falsehood, by infatuating him, and making him a fool, which resolves all the difficulty.

There is perhaps no text in the Bible that has puzzled interpreters more than what the versions make God say, Ez. xx. 25, 26. "Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live; and I polluted them in their own gifts, in that they caused to pass through the fire, all that openeth the womb, that I might make them desolate, to the end that they might know that I am the Lord." Some understand those words with St. Austin, of the ceremonial law; Luther and Flaccius, of the political, and even of the moral laws: Kimki, of the laws of the enemies of the people of God: Calvin, of the laws and ceremonies of paganism, and of superstitious traditions: Junius, Piscator, and Haksplan, of the threatenings and curses of the law. This very diversity of interpretation, may reasonably make us suspect the exactness of the translation, which makes God speak in so doubtful terms, that every body may understand them as he pleases. But since God often declares, that his laws are just and good, and give life to the observers of them; and since he is not the author of the wicked and superstitious laws of the Pagans, but the Devil and wicked men, it is not reasonable to suppose, that he should express himself in such a manner, especially upon an occasion, on which he manifestly designs, to let the Israelites see, that he had no way been wanting in instructing and directing them, and that they themselves only were to blame for those crimes which he reproaches them with. Why then should not the translators

have concluded that the Hebrew particle HE, is here supprest, they have supplied it in several other places, where there was no such necessity for so doing, as there is in this place? Why also should they suppose, that what is said here of "making the first born to pass," should signify that the Israelites made their children pass through the fire? Since in the original it is said, that God made the first born to pass, as the learned Spencer observes, who proves that this text is parallel to that of Moses; "thou shalt separate unto the Lord—every firstling. Why likewise should they translate, "that I might make them desolate," since the Hebrew verb *Schaman* signifies also to be ravished with admiration, and is almost always so taken, when it is applied to men, as Schindler and Spencer have sufficiently made out? And this answers very well to what happened on that occasion. For God having consecrated the first born of the Israelites for his public service, when he had preserved them from the destroying angel, allowing them withal to be redeemed for five sacred shekels, it is not to be doubted, but that all Israel was filled with wonder: as also when he separated the Levites from all the first born for the sacred functions, and made the earth to swallow up Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, for murmuring upon that account. Those two verses then are thus to be translated: "for, have I given them statutes that were not good, or laws whereby they should not live? or have I made them impure by their gifts? when I consecrated to myself their first born, to ravish them with admiration, that they might know I am the Lord." This version has nothing but what answers to the words of the original, and the style of the scripture: it represents what God had done in favour of the Israelites; it continues and aggravates the reproaches which God makes to them throughout this whole book, of having abandoned themselves to the idolatry of the Egyptians and Canaanites, though he had neglected nothing to dissuade them from it. In a word, it is so natural, that one can scarce conceive how it should never have been thought upon by any, before Manasseh Ben Israel.

SOBER DISSUASIONS FROM DRUNKENNESS.

*"Every inordinate cup is unblest, and the ingredient
a Devil."*—SHAKESPEARE.

If you wish to be always thirsty, be a drunkard, for the oftener and more you drink, the oftener and more thirsty you will be.

If you seek to prevent your friends raising you in the world, be a drunkard, for that will defeat all their efforts.

If you would effectually counteract your own attempts to do well, be a drunkard, and you will not be disappointed.

If you wish to repel the endeavours of the whole human race to raise you to character, credit and prosperity, be a drunkard, and you will most assuredly triumph.

If you are determined to be poor, be a drunkard, and you will soon be ragged and penniless.

If you would wish to starve your family, be a drunkard, for that will consume the means of their support.

If you would be sponged by knaves, be a drunkard, and that will make their task easy.

If you wish to be robbed, be a drunkard which will enable the thief to do it with more safety.

If you wish to blunt your senses, be a drunkard, and you will soon lose your understanding.

If you wish to incapacitate yourself for rational intercourse, be a drunkard, for that will render you wholly unfit for it.

If you wish all your prospects in life to be clouded, be a drunkard, and they will soon be dark enough.

If you would destroy your body, be a drunkard, as drunkenness is the mother of disease.

If you mean to ruin your soul, be a drunkard, that you may be excluded from heaven.

If you are resolved on suicide, be a drunkard, that being a sure mode of destruction.

If you would expose both your folly and your secrets, be a drunkard, and they will run out while the liquor runs in.

If you are plagued with great bodily strength, be a drunkard, and it will soon be subdued by so powerful an antagonist.

If you would get rid of your money without knowing how, be a drunkard, and it will vanish insensibly.

If you would have no resource when past labour, but a work-house, be a drunkard, and you will be unable to provide any.

If you are determined to expel all domestic harmony from your house, be a drunkard, and discord, with all her evil train will soon enter.

If you would be always under strong suspicion, be a drunk-

ard, for, little as you think it, all agree that those who steal from themselves and families will rob others.

If you would be reduced to the necessity of shunning your creditors, be a drunkard, and you will soon have reason to prefer the by-paths to the public streets.

If you would be a dead weight on the community and cumber the ground, be a drunkard, for that will render you useless, helpless, burthensome, and expensive.

If you like the amusement of a court of conscience, be a drunkard, and you may be often gratified.

If you would be a nuisance, be a drunkard, for the approach of a drunkard is like that of a dunghill.

If you would be odious to your family and friends, be a drunkard, and you will soon become even hateful to yourself.

If you would be a pest to society, be a drunkard, and you will be avoided as infectious.

If you dread reformation of your faults, be a drunkard, and you will be impervious to all admonition.

If you would smash windows, break the peace, get your bones broken, tumble under carts and horses, and be locked up in the watch house, be a drunkard, and it will be strange if you do not succeed.

Finally, if you are determined to be utterly destroyed in estate body and soul, be a drunkard, and you will soon know that it is impossible to adopt more effectual means to accomplish your—END.

(*Christian Inquirer.*)

THE GOODNESS OF GOD,

Manifested in the happiness of the sensitive Creation.

THAT the design of the Great Creator, was benevolent, cannot be doubted when we contemplate the provision which is made, not merely for the sustenance, but also for the gratification and enjoyment of all that live and move.

NOR is the design abortive. It is a happy world, after all. The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence. In a spring noon, or a summer evening, on whichever side I turn my eyes, myriads of happy beings crowd upon my view. "The insect youth are on the wing." Swarms of new-born *flies* are trying their pinions in the air. Their sportive motions, their wanton mazes, their gratuitous activity, their continual change of

place without use or purpose, testify their joy, and the exultation which they feel in their lately discovered faculties. A *bee* amongst the flowers in spring is one of the cheerfullest objects that can be looked upon. Its life appears to be all enjoyment; so busy, and so pleased; yet it is only a specimen of insect life, with which, by reason of the animal being half-domesticated, we happen to be better acquainted than we are with that of others. The *whole winged* insect tribe, it is probable, are equally intent upon their proper employments, and, under every variety of constitution, gratified, and perhaps equally gratified, by the offices which the Author of their nature has assigned to them. But the atmosphere is not the only scene of enjoyment for the insect race. Plants are covered with aphides, greedily sucking their juices, and constantly, as it should seem, in the act of sucking. It cannot be doubted but that this is a state of gratification. What else should fix them so close to the operation, and so long? Other species are *running about* with an alacrity in their motions which carries with it every mark of pleasure. Large patches of ground are sometimes half-covered with these brisk and sprightly natures. If we look to what the *waters* produce, shoals of the fry of fish frequent the margins of rivers, of lakes, and of the sea itself. These are so happy, that they know not what to do with themselves. Their attitudes, their vivacity, their leaps out of the water, their frolics in it, (which I have noticed a thousand times with equal attention and amusement,) all conduce to shew their excess of spirits, and are simply the effects of that excess. Walking by the sea side, in a calm evening, upon a sandy shore, and with an ebbing tide, I have frequently remarked the appearance of a dark cloud or rather very thick mist, hanging over the edge of the water, to the height, perhaps, of half a yard, and of the breadth of two or three yards, stretching along the coast as far as the eye could reach, and always retiring with the water. When this cloud came to be examined, it proved to be nothing else than so much space, filled with young *shrimps*, in the act of bounding into the air from the shallow margin of the water, or from the wet sand. If any motion of a mute animal could express de-

light, it was this ; if they had meant to make signs of their happiness, they could not have done it more intelligibly. Suppose then, what I have no doubt of, each individual of this number to be in a state of positive enjoyment, what a sum, collectively, of gratification and pleasure, have we here before our view ?

The *young* of all animals appear to me to receive pleasure simply from the exercise of their limbs and bodily faculties, without reference to any end to be attained, or any use to be answered by the exertion. A child, without knowing any thing of the use of language, is, in a high degree, delighted with being able to speak. Its incessant repetition of the few articulate sounds, or, perhaps, of the single word, which it has learnt to pronounce, proves this point clearly. Nor is it less pleased with its first successful endeavours to walk, or rather to run (which precedes walking,) although entirely ignorant of the importance of the attainment to its future life ; and even without applying it to any present purpose. A child is delighted with speaking, without having any thing to say, and with walking, without knowing where to go. And, prior to both these, I am disposed to believe, that the waking hours of infancy are agreeably taken up with the exercise of vision, or, perhaps, more properly speaking, with learning to see.

But it is not for youth alone that the great Parent of creation, hath provided. Happiness is found with the purring cat, no less than with the playful kitten ; in the arm-chair of dozing age, as well as in either the sprightliness of the dance, or the animation of the chace. To novelty, to acuteness of sensation, to hope, to ardour of pursuit, succeeds, what is, in no inconsiderable degree, an equivalent for them all, " perception of ease. " Herein is the exact difference between the young and old. The young are not happy, but when enjoying pleasure ; the old are happy, when free from pain. And this constitution suits with the degrees of animal power which they respectively possess. The vigour of youth was to be stimulated to action by impatience of rest ; whilst, to the imbecility of age, quietness and repose become positive gratifications. In one important respect the advantage is with the old. A state of ease is, gene-

rally speaking, more attainable than a state of pleasure. A constitution, therefore, which can enjoy ease, is preferable to that which can taste only pleasure. This same perception of ease oftentimes renders old age a condition of great comfort; especially when riding at its anchor, after a busy or tempestuous life. It is well described by Rousseau, to be the interval of repose and enjoyment, between the hurry and the end of life. How far the same cause extends to other animal natures cannot be judged of with certainty. The appearance of satisfaction, with which most animals, as their activity subsides, seek and enjoy rest, affords reason to believe that this source of gratification is appointed to advanced life, under all, or most, of its various forms. In the species with which we are best acquainted, namely our own, I am far, even as an observer of human life, from thinking, that youth is its happiest season, much less the only happy one: as a Christian, I am willing to believe that there is a great deal of truth in the following representation given by a very pious writer, as well as excellent man. (*) “ To the intelligent and virtuous, old age presents a scene of tranquil enjoyments, of obedient appetites, of well-regulated affections, of maturity in knowledge, and of calm preparation for immortality. In this serene and dignified state, placed, as it were, on the confines of two worlds, the mind of a good man reviews what is past with the complacency of an approving conscience, and looks forward with humble confidence in the mercy of God, and with devout aspirations towards his eternal and ever-increasing favour.”

(Paley's *Natural Theology*.)

(*) Dr. Percival, of Manchester.

RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES OF THOMAS JEFFERSON.

From the Christian Inquirer.

As it has ever been the practice, of a certain class of religionists to denounce as *infidels*, those who have discernment and honesty

enough to see and reject the absurdities and contradictions which have so long been the disgrace of pure Christianity, so it has happened, that the illustrious philosopher and enlightened statesman, Thomas Jefferson, has been ranked with those who deny the divine authenticity of the Christian religion. That our readers may know Mr. Jefferson's opinion on this subject, we subjoin to this memoir, the following letter which was addressed by him to the venerable Dr. Priestley.

Thomas Jefferson was born on the 2d. of April, (O. S.) 1743, in the county of Albemarle, at Shadwell, a country seat which now belongs to his grandson, within a short distance of Monticello, and within half a mile of the Rivanna Mills. The family of Mr. Jefferson were among the earliest emigrants to Virginia; of which colony his grandfather, Thomas Jefferson, was a native. His father was named Peter Jefferson, and was known as one of the Commissioners for determining the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, in the year 1747; from whom he derived an extensive and valuable estate. He received the highest honors at the College of William and Mary; and studied the law under the celebrated George Wythe, late Chancellor of Virginia. Before he had attained his twenty-fifth year, he was a distinguished member of the Virginia Legislature, and took an active part in all the measures which they adopted in opposition to the usurpations of Great Britain. In 1775 he is said to have been the author of the protest against the propositions of Lord North. He was subsequently transferred to the General Congress at Philadelphia, where he distinguished himself by the firmness of his sentiments, and the energy of his compositions. Of these qualifications, no other evidence could be required than the imperishable document which declares us "free, sovereign, and independent States."

From 1777 to '79 (for certain portions of those years) he was occupied with Wythe and Pendleton, in revising the laws of Virginia. In 1779, he succeeded Patrick Henry as Governor of the State. In 1781 he composed his celebrated work, entitled "Notes on Virginia." In the summer of 1782, he was in Congress at the moment when the Virginia Legislature were framing

a State Constitution. The draught of the instrument which he transmitted on that occasion, was not received till the day when the committee were to report the result of their labours. They were so much pleased with his preamble that they adopted it as a part of their report. In 1784 he left the United States, being associated in a plenipotentiary commission with Franklin and Adams, addressed to the several powers of Europe, for the purpose of concluding treaties of commerce. In October 1789 he obtained leave to return home, and on his arrival was made the first Secretary of State, under Gen. Washington. His correspondence with the French and English Ministers; his reports on money, and weights and measures; on the fisheries, and on restrictions of commerce, are simple attestations of the enlarged views of the philosopher and the financier. In 1797, he was elected Vice President; and four years after, President of the United States, which office he held for eight years.

During the last years of his life, his favourite object of pursuit, was the establishment of the Virginia University at Charlottesville: of this institution he was founder, and on him devolved the care of marking out the course of instruction, the rules of government, and even the superintendence of the buildings.

Mr. Jefferson died at Monticello, at ten minutes before one o'clock, in the afternoon of July 4th, in the 84th year of his age. He was confined to his bed little more than a week, though the disease of which he died (diarrhœa) had been of long continuance. His death was hourly expected for several days; he was sensible of its approach, and prescribed the mode of his own interment. He expressed a strong desire, in which he was gratified that his life should be prolonged to the fourth. He was buried on the following day without any procession, in compliance with his own request, though multitudes assembled at the burying place at Monticello, to see him interred.

Washington, April 9th, 1803.

DEAR SIR.—While on a short visit lately to Monticello, I received from you a copy of your comparative View of Socrates and Jesus, and I avail myself of the first moment of leisure after

my return, to acknowledge the pleasure I had in the perusal, and the desire it excited to see you take up the subject on a more extensive scale. In consequence of some conversation with Dr. Rush in the years 1798—9, I had promised some day to write him a letter, giving him my view of the christian system. I have reflected often on it since, and even sketched the outlines in my own hand. I should first take a general view of the moral doctrines of the most remarkable of the ancient philosophers, of whose ethics we have sufficient information to make an estimate: say, of Pythagoras, Epicurus, Epictetus, Socrates, Cicero, Seneca, Antoninus, I should do justice to the branches of morality they have treated well, but point out the importance of those in which they are deficient. I should then take a view of the deism and ethics of the Jews, and show in what a degraded state they were, and the necessity they presented of a reformation. I should proceed to a view of the life, character and doctrines of Jesus, who, sensible of the incorrectness of their ideas of the deity, and of morality, endeavoured to bring them to the principles of a pure deism and juster notions of the attributes of God, to reform their moral doctrines to the standard of reason, justice, and philanthropy, and to inculcate the belief of a future state. This view would purposely omit the question of his divinity, and even of his inspiration. To do him justice, it would be necessary to remark the disadvantages his doctrines have to encounter, not having been committed to writing by himself, but by the most unlettered of men, by memory, long after they had heard them from him, when much was forgotten, much misunderstood, and presented in very paradoxical shapes. Yet such are the fragments remaining, as to show a master workman, and that his system of morality was the most benevolent and sublime, probably that has been ever taught, and more perfect than those of any of the ancient philosophers. *His character and doctrines have received still greater injury from those who pretend to be his spiritual disciples, and who have disfigured and sophisticated his actions and precepts from views of personal interest, so as to induce the unthinking part of mankind to throw off the whole system in disgust, and to pass sentence as an impostor on the most innocent, the most benevolent, the most eloquent and sublime character that has ever been exhibited to man.* This is the outline; but I have not the time, and still less, the information which the subject needs. It will therefore rest with me in contemplation only.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Rev. J. Priestley, LL. D.]

RATIONAL DEVOTION.

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector.

SIR,

I request a little space in your useful Miscellany, to notice the communication of your correspondent, "A Young Unitarian." But before I proceed to the object of my letter, I would first remove a misapprehension or two under which he labours ; as they may operate a little to my disadvantage, in exciting a feeling of prejudice or distrust.

He evidently doubts my sincerity, in the adoption of my signature, p. 253. I can assure him it is strictly correct ; that I am what I sign myself,— "A Unitarian Convert." Nor am I of so recent a date as he appears to suppose ; or so little acquainted with Unitarianism and Unitarians, as his words would seem to indicate. I have studied I think both ; and I trust, as both are to be viewed in a public capacity, I may be allowed to speak of them with that "honest freedom," which, Addison says, is "the principle of an ingenuous mind."

I beg also to assure your correspondent, that "the darkened glass," p. 255, by which my intellectual vision was formerly aided, has long since been broken to shivers ; so there can be no danger, because no possibility, of being deceived by that which does not exist. It was not, however, of the darkest hue. It was not a Methodistic, or a Calvinistic glass, but a Church of England one. Nevertheless, it was sufficiently of a hue, to distress the sight ; and I am indeed glad that it is now broken, and think there is little probability of my applying to the same filmy optician for another. The glass which I now have, is, I trust, clear and transparent ; and if there be any thing wrong in the ideas which I form of things around me, it is not to be attributed to the glass, but to some defect in the vision.

Having thus premised, I now proceed to reply to the communication of the Young Unitarian.

And all that I have to do, in reference to the main question, is to shew, that he has not met a single argument which I advanced.

I maintained, that it was quite sufficient to decide the point at issue, that Jesus Christ, the Teacher sent from God, had taught us to use petition in our devotional addresses, p. 203.—To this, your correspondent offers not a single objection—says not a single word. Yet he should have disproved it, to establish his position. For he will not affirm, that it is not incumbent upon us to obey Jesus Christ. On the contrary, he says, in the communication to which my attention is now directed, p. 249. “That Christ is the way wherein Christians ought to walk, must be readily granted.” And yet he adds, in my opinion, very strangely, “but, that he (Christ) has declared that the worshipper must use petition before he can become his follower, or, a doer of the will of his heavenly Father; I am not yet convinced.” Nor am I; because I think no such declaration is to be found. But then, if he has directed us to use petition, for which I contend, how are we his obedient followers, unless we act agreeably to his words? “He that hath my commandments,” says he, “and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of my Father.” “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.” It is surely as much our duty to obey Christ in one instance, as another; and in order to learn in what our duty consists, we have only to ascertain the precise meaning of his words.

Having asserted that our Saviour directed us to use petition in prayer, I adduced proofs in support of my assertion; one of which was, the Lord’s Prayer; which I contended, was “decidedly a *petitionary* prayer;” and was “plain and positive evidence for the use of petition in prayer.” p. p. 205. 206.—In reply, the Young Unitarian asks, p. p. 249, 250, whether “I will follow the words literally,” or, “consider the prayer a model only, by which we are to regulate our worship?” With due deference to your correspondent, I must beg leave to say, that this has nothing to do with the subject. He should have disproved, or attempted to disprove, my assertion. He should have shewn, or endeavoured to shew, that the prayer was *not* petitionary. *This* was the point to which the whole force of his argument should have been directed. And I must be allow-

ed to add, that a failure here, is a failure altogether. Of what consequence is it to the question under consideration, whether we follow the prayer literally, or take it merely as a model? For in either case the principle is the same. If we take it literally, we use petition. If we adopt it as a model, we still use petition; or we do not regulate our prayers by the model which we have before us. My own opinion is, that it is given us as a model. "After this manner therefore pray ye;" that is, according to the principles here laid down. And your correspondent admits, p. 252, that "we are to regulate our worship by it;" which is all I contend for; because we must then use petition; for it is plainly a petitionary prayer.

I shewed, p. 205, that Christ and his apostles did not, as was supposed, use petition merely to convince others that they were divinely commissioned; because they used it in *private*, where no such motive could exist; where, in fact there was no "audience" to "convince."—In reply, the Young Unitarian takes up his old untenable position, with as much complacency as though it were the most impregnable fortress. He should have invalidated, or attempted to invalidate, the *facts* which I had brought forward, in support of my assertion; and not have repeated, with amplification, what he had before advanced. He should have remembered the axiom of disputation, that it is in vain to argue against facts. They must be invalidated, or all arguments are useless. So long as they exist, no brilliancy of talents, no power of reasoning, no adroitness of sophistry, can affect the position which they are adduced to support.

I contended, p. 204, that if we were not to use petition, because God knew before-hand what we had need of, it would follow, that we were not to give birth to any devotional sentiment whatever; for every sentiment must be known by God, before it is expressed; consequently, the argument against petition, on this ground, would set aside devotion altogether.—"This," says the Young Unitarian, p. 250, "never was intended, nor do I yet think that it follows as a consequence. I before asserted, and again declare, that every thing devotional is operative only on man; &c." Be it so; yet does it not inevitably follow, that

if the foreknowledge of the Deity renders any part of devotion unnecessary, it must equally render all unnecessary? For what is there that proceeds from the human breast, which the Deity does not foreknow? Therefore, the argument against petition, on this ground, would be utterly subversive of all piety entirely.

The Young Unitarian plainly denies, p. 249, that his view of prayer "is calculated to chill, rather than encourage devotional feelings." But is it not evident, that whatever tends to check the free exercise of filial piety, must discourage, and therefore damp, devotion in the same degree? My object, however, is not to contend for the *influence* of one mode above another, but the *correctness*; though at the same time, that which is most true, must be most salutary.

I agree with the Young Unitarian, p. 252, that "devotion is to be regulated by times, places, and circumstances;" if he means, that it should always have a proper reference to them; but if he intends to say, that it may be one thing to-day, and another thing to-morrow, then I must beg leave to differ from him entirely. It is in all times, places, and circumstances, the same; and the only difference is, in the *application* of its principles to those different cases. That is, thanksgiving is thanksgiving, wherever offered up; and petition is petition wherever presented. The only difference is, in the cases of different individuals; for the sentiments are the same, wherever they exist.

I trust, I am equally anxious with your correspondent, to adopt a conciliatory demeanor towards Unbelievers; and to be, as the Apostle was, "all things to all men," But then, in order to this, it is not necessary to act inconsistently with conviction, or the express declarations of Jesus Christ. The Apostle most certainly did not; and it would be wrong to understand him as justifying any thing in the least bordering on a temporising line of conduct. "One man," says he, "esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." But he adds, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.—For whatsoever is not of faith (principle or conviction) is sin."

Rom. xiv. 5, 22, 23. In another place he says, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgement;—he that judgeth me is the Lord." 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4. When he exhorts servants to be obedient to their masters; it is not "as men pleasers; but in the singleness of heart, fearing God." Col. iii. 22. "He withstood Peter to the face, because he was to be blamed." Gal. ii. 11. "He thought not good to take him (Mark) with them, who departed from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work." Acts xv. 38. In a case of flagrant injustice, he exclaimed, "They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? nay verily, let them come themselves and fetch us out." Acts xvi. 37. In short, never was there a man of a more straight forward line of conduct, independent spirit, or undaunted courage. But he was also remarkable for a conciliatory demeanor; and this is all that we are to understand by the words, "I became all things to all men, that by all means I might save some." 1 Cor. ix. 22.

I will therefore repeat, that if, when steadily following our duty, the Unbeliever sneers at us, "we cannot help it," and we ought not to mind it; for it is a paramount obligation, as well as our greatest wisdom, to obey Jesus Christ; and no other individual whatever should be set in competition with him.

I had no intention, however, of doing the least "injustice" to your Correspondent on this point. I did not suppose for a moment, that he would carry conciliation to the Unbeliever so far, as to disregard the words or the authority of Jesus Christ; or that he would for a moment balance the claims between them. But I certainly did think, that his anxiety, to remove every obstacle in the way of the conversion of the Unbeliever, had led him to rather a timid and fearful line of conduct. It was a laudable feeling, carried to an extreme. And I think it is a mistaken one, even with respect to the Unbeliever. He will not be won over to christianity, by any thing like temporizing or a dereliction of duty, on the part of its professors. Of all men, he is most offended with a trimming kind of policy. He would rather be won nobly or nobly vanquished. And I think experi-

ence has shewn, that candour, consistency, steadiness of principle, and free and open inquiry, are best calculated to impress him favourably.

When I speak of temporizing and trimming, I by no means suppose that your Correspondent could admire such conduct, or could act in such a manner; but extreme anxiety with respect to those whom we would convince of their errors, may not unfrequently approach very near it; and this as it were, imperceptibly, and almost in spite of ourselves.

I do not admire tautology and fanaticism in prayer, any more than the young Unitarian. I think devotion should be calm, and gentle, and reverential, and expressive of all filial regard; such a spirit, in fine, as breathes in the 17th chapter of St. John. But while I would divest religion of all the blemishes which have been attached to it, I would be careful at the same time, not to deprive it of any its native beauties. And I would study, as far as consistent, "not to let any good be evil spoken of;" but I would be anxious also "not to turn either to the right hand, or to the left."

I come now to notice a serious charge in the last letter of the Young Unitarian, pp. 253—255. I am sorry to turn to it; but it is necessary for the justification of myself. It would seem, from your Correspondent's words, as if I would brand the whole denomination of Unitarians! "Am I then become their enemy, because I tell them the truth?" Is truth a libel in religion, as well as in politics? If not, wherein am I uncharitable? For is it not a well known fact, that Unitarians generally, or at least great numbers of them, are lamentably deficient in the article of family religion? And are they as exemplary as they ought to be, in their attendance upon public worship? In many cases, I am afraid, our Meeting Houses are almost deserted during one part of the Lord's Day. In the last No. of the Reformer, p. 384, Letter vii. of the Rev. R. Wright, to the Unitarians of the North-east District, the following passage occurs. "Unitarians have been charged with the neglect of public worship, and indifference to christian institutions. I trust this charge is far from being true with respect to the generality of Unitarians, many of

whom are exemplary in their attendance on public worship, and their regard to the institutions of Jesus Christ; yet I fear, my brethren, that some of you have given cause for the above charge.' At a meeting of Unitarians, consisting of Ministers and others, not long ago held in this county, it was stated, that Unitarians were the most singular in their attendance upon public worship of any denomination. The mention of a fact so much to be lamented, drew forth from a highly respectable individual present, an involuntary exclamation of "shame, shame!" And all assembled on the occasion appeared to feel the force of the words, and to acquiesce in their truth. I am not, therefore, the only person who thinks there is a great deficiency of devotion among Unitarians; and if the mention of such a thing be "braiding" the whole body, the most exemplary of the denomination are equally open to the charge.

But your Correspondent does not do me justice here. I acquit him most freely of every wilful intention of doing me injustice. But he assumes a case of high culpability, and, affixing it upon me, charges me with a breach of charity; which is something like inventing a crime, for the purpose of arraigning a particular individual as a criminal. He asks, p p. 253, 254, "Does he enter the private chambers of the denomination, the closets of their devotions in such abundance as to leave ground for such an insinuation? Or has he the power to roam all space and pry into the secrets of every bosom? &c." No, certainly; and I think I did not express myself in such a manner, as to justify such remarks. My words were qualified with "I fear," &c. And I was not alluding to *private*, but *family*, devotion; to something that might be visible, and not concealed; to something that might be known, and not secret. And therefore I think it was not just to charge me with the uncharitableness of presuming to pry into the closet, and the recesses of the heart.

In conclusion, I would beg the Young Unitarian to accept my cordial good will. If I have expressed myself with any undue warmth towards him, I am sorry for it—it was not intended. I gave him credit in my first letter, p. 203; for the purest motives, and I still do so; and, though he may be in error, I firmly be-

lieve, it is not that of the heart, but of the understanding ; and therefore perfectly innocent.

A UNITARIAN CONVERT.

P. S. It was my intention to have noticed the Communication of your Correspondent Y. on the clause in the Lord's Prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." But having already occupied too much of the Reflector, this must be deferred till another opportunity.

ON ORDINATION SERVICES.

"How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage ?—PAUL."

To the Editor of the Christian Reflector,

SIR,

YOU have no doubt perceived the attempts made of late to drag that venerable usage, styled Ordination, (whose hallowed benefits we have for so long a time pertinaciously rejected,) from the oblivion to which it has been consigned. It is true it re-appears in a new but somewhat suspicious garb ; it has lost the open, honest, lineaments which it formerly possessed, and skulks in sleek and pious guise, suited to the canting spirit of the age. The ancient impress is wanting, of an independent and fearless avowal of purpose ;—it is the re-vivification of a form, once consigned by universal consent to the shades ;—now again conjured from its repose—invested with its ancient name,—its external appearance, appropriated to its general resemblance, but slightly defaced. With its intentions and designed ends, thus half developed, and half concealed, it may be safely characterized, as a temporizing service ; and it is probably, chiefly on account of this its indefinite character, that these modern ordination services are not, and it may safely be averred will not become popular amongst the mass of Unitarians. The People, and to their honor be it spoken, many of the Ministers also, view them with great distrust, as inimical to Religious liberty. They know well that ancient Ordinations were effective supports of priestly domination ; they know well what the term Ordination means *now*, in the Church of England, and amongst orthodox dissenters ; they are well aware of the superstitious feelings, with which the name is generally and neces-

sarily connected, and they therefore denounce the appropriation of an appellation so doubtful; and view with jealousy the services identified thereby.

But our modern Ordinations it is said, do not embody those principles which the name formerly implied. Is then its meaning changed? Not at all. It is unaltered in general acceptance: a definite idea is attached to it; it is used in our language in reference to ecclesiastical matters, in the unvarying signification, of an investment of sacerdotal authority, and the tenacity with which the name is retained and applied by the advocates of these services, whilst its legitimate meaning is denied, justifies the suspicion that the reason of its retention, is to mask some as yet lurking and concealed purpose. Why else this gross inconsistency? this apparently intentional absurdity? Or can we suppose it to arise from an infantine *penchant* for the antiquity of a name? A name unwarrantably assumed; because those who use it allow that it is not descriptive of the ceremony, that it conveys ideas which they disclaim;—and gives rise to erroneous impressions which they deprecate. And yet, although it is a term not exactly appropriate, it will do well enough;—its advocates are well pleased with it, and are determined to employ it, in their own somehow restricted, reserved sense; that is, to give it just what signification they please.

This is very reasonable, truly. But then we have no security, for the existence and continuance of liberal sentiments in these meetings, thus characterized by an indefinite title. We have no check upon them, no limited specific statement of principles, acknowledged, binding, and influential; and therefore no pledge that at a *convenient* opportunity, the old original ceremony may not be introduced, screened by that ominous name, in the first instance so unappropriately assumed. This conclusion is not impossible; it is not even improbable; but the procedure may be modified and restrained by the blessed effects of education, the consequent diffusion of knowledge, the general dissemination of the principles of civil and religious liberty, and by that vigilant jealousy which is their constant accompaniment.

It must however be admitted, that if this incongruous ceremony does not become fashionable, it will not be from want of exertion on the part of its admirers and advocates. The York literati, Students Tutors and all, seem determined to identify themselves with it, (*) and what stubborn wight, can resist the profound erudition and transcendent talents of Royal York?

(*) Not only does the Visiter in his address to the students of York College at the annual examination of 1825, express his opinion, "that it is a highly seasonable and proper service," but the official report of that meeting, as inserted in the Repository is headed "*Manchester College York; Annual examination, and ORDINATION of Rev. W. S. Brown at Hull.*" A truly edifying coalition!

The students at their several settlements, seem to be staunch in their adherence, and the odds are great, but in whatever corner of the kingdom you fix the imposing ceremony, Alma Mater will be present by one or more official representatives. (†)

Then, besides the gracious patronage thus afforded, the thing is so genteel, so respectable,—that it cannot fail to be highly fascinating to pretty Ladies, and Gentlemen. And to become fashionable, (not popular) even if they had not received the awful sanction of that mysterious transatlantic sage, whose oracular behests are succumbed to in these degenerate days in silent submission. (‡)

But if our ordination loving Pastors, really require some ceremonial inauguration, (||] to add to their importance in society. can they do better than return to the sober practice of olden time? They will then be furnished with indisputable testimonials of their titles to the *sacred* office, and be invested with true spiritual authority to instruct, admonish and reprove. Let us revive Ordination in all its pristine purity and excellence, and not with unheard of folly reject its most important privilege. Let our ministers participate in *all* its glorious immunities; and no longer remaining undedicated to the office of religious instructors, let them by the laying on of hands become impregnated to saturation with the Holy Ghost. It is indeed truly lamentable to see our respected spiritual shepherds, assuming no higher titles than pastors or teachers: whereas, if ordained, regularly, officially ordained, they might at least *pretend to holy orders*, if the hauteur of a dominant establishment refused to recognize them as being in holy orders. They might

(†) Witness the inductions of Messrs. Brown, (*Hull*), Taggart, (*Norwich*), Worthington, (*Manchester*), and Aspland, (*Chester*.)

(‡) This critic with most amazing confidence, calls it “one of the most simple, innocent, useful, and interesting ceremonies in the world!!” What amiable modesty! Vide Mon. Repos. Vol. xxi. p. 80.

(||] How these lauded Ordinations sink in comparison with the simple and dignified service with which Mr. Grundy commenced his labors at Paradise Street Chapel (*Liverpool*.) Here the minister is neither afraid nor ashamed of delivering to his congregation a manly honest avowal of his own duties; and this open profession tautamont to a pledge publicly given, must in impressive effect, be infinitely greater than can possibly be produced, by the exertions of the most highly gifted alien.

The reciprocal duties which devolve upon the congregation, faithfully and forcibly delineated by their newly elected Pastor, will come home to his hearers with an intensity of interest which no stranger can create. Such a service as this, beautiful in christian simplicity, seems calculated if any thing is, to promote in a superior degree that affectionate sympathy,—those indescribably delicate feelings and associations, which are essential to the permanency and cordiality of the connection, but which can never emanate from, or be fostered by, the finest display of exotic talent, on the most imposing assemblage of comparatively uninterested strangers.

as Priests, exercise the godly functions, which appertain to that sacred character, and lord it in comely gowns, and clerical bands, with humble infallibility over those of their flocks, tame and abject enough, to quail at their mandate, and bow their necks to the yoke of vassalage.

A DISSENTER.

To be continued.

Obituary.

THE REV. JOHN YATES.

Died, at his house, Toxteth Park, near Liverpool, on Friday, Nov. 10th, the day on which he completed his 71st year, the Rev. John Yates. and was interred on Wednesday the 15th, in the chapel yard, Toxteth Park. It was the intention of the family that the funeral should have been private ; but a wish having been expressed by many of the members of the congregation assembling in Paradise street chapel, of which Mr. Yates had been the Pastor 46 years, that they might be permitted to testify their regards to the memory of their late excellent and esteemed Minister, there was a numerous attendance at the mournful ceremony. The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. W. Shepherd with great solemnity, who delivered an impressive discourse on the occasion.

On Sunday 19th, Mr. Shepherd preached an appropriate sermon at the chapel in Paradise st. from John v. 35, "He was a burning and a shining light ; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." In his address to the congregation, Mr. Shepherd gave a faithful sketch of the character and valuable services of their departed Pastor. The Sermon will be printed. Nearly the whole of the congregation appeared in mourning.

Mr. Yates, as a most affectionate parent and a sincere friend, will be long remembered with love, esteem, and regret. Cheerful in his disposition, and affable in his manners, he rejoiced to unite with the wise and benevolent of all sects and all parties, in promoting the welfare of his fellow creatures. The public charities of the town, to which he formerly devoted much of his time

—the schools, to the establishment of which he contributed—the institutions for the diffusion of science, which he strove to foster, will bear ample testimony to the excellence of his understanding, and the generosity of his heart; but his chief delight was in the discharge of his duties as a minister of Christ. The zeal, the candour, the fearlessness, the judicious advice with which he encouraged the virtuous and admonished the wanderer, the diligence with which he instructed the young, the affection with which he attended to the interests of the poorer members of his congregation, will long be felt by many whom he has assisted to lead in the pleasant paths of religious wisdom. As he lived so he died, fully confiding in the goodness and mercy of his heavenly Father,—his last audible prayer being, “God’s will be done!” (*Billings’s Paper.*)

Lines on the Death of the Rev. J. Yates.

Farewell, thou reverend Teacher, sent of God!
 Calmly now take thy rest beneath the sod.
 Silent is now that mild persuasive tongue,
 On which thy hearers oft have fondly hung.
 No more shalt thou with easy grace reprove;
 No more shalt animate with tones of love.
 Thy long career, unmarked by zealot’s fire,
 No furious wrath, no wild sectarian ire,
 Deformed thy pulpit labours; with the flock
 All solid truths were placed on reason’s rock.
 No ranting strange effusions came from thee;
 But doctrines suited to a people free.
 Freedom of thought, of will, of virtue, strong
 Did’st thou inculcate to a list’ning throng.
 And he who meek like Jesus (*) went before,
 Thou now hast greeted on a happier shore;
 Mingling in bliss with brighter saints in light,
 Where sorrows, cares, or grief, no more affright.
 He who now pens this poor feeble lay
 Doth hope to join ye in that bright array.

E. K.

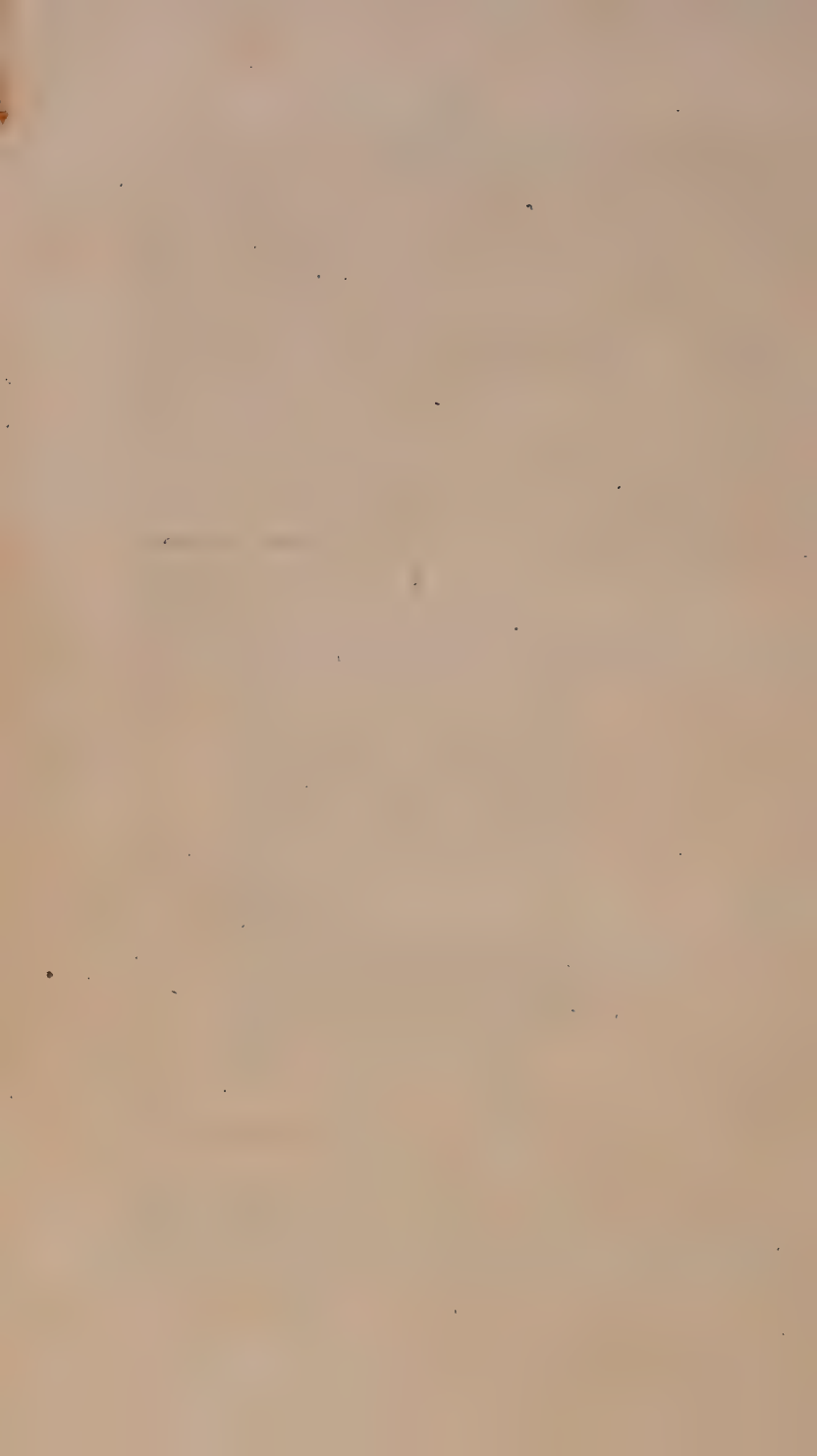
(*) *The Rev. Pendlebury Houghton.*

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We have reprinted the numbers wanted to complete the former series, and the copies remaining on hand, five volumes in boards, may be had for *twelve shillings and six-pence* the set; but a single volume cannot be sold under the full price—some few odd volumes remain on hand, which those who wish to complete their sets, may obtain by an early application.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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